



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

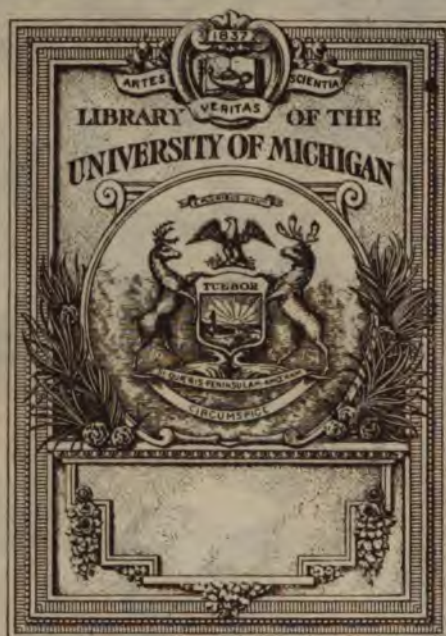
### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

B 1,180,735

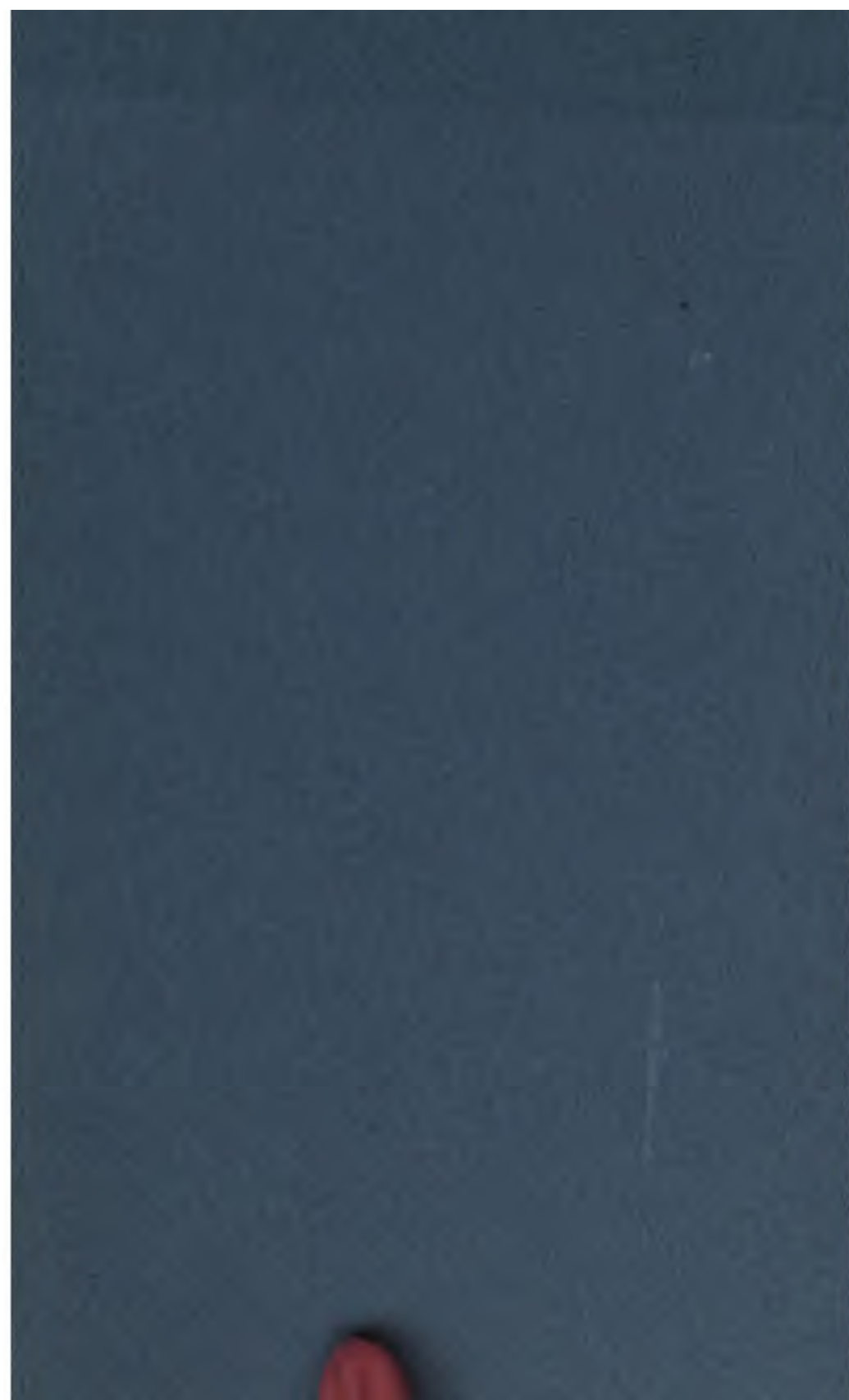
Marie Loretto Lilly

THE GEORGIC



805  
H 68  
-116





# Hesperia

SUPPLEMENTARY SERIES:

STUDIES IN ENGLISH PHILOLOGY

Edited by JAMES W. BRIGHT

---

Number 6

---

## THE GEORGIC

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF THE  
VERGILIAN TYPE OF DIDACTIC POETRY

BY

MARIE LORETTO LILLY, PH. D.,

*Sometime Fellow of the Johns Hopkins University*

---

BALTIMORE

THE JOHNS HOPKINS PRESS

1919

44

**IN GRATEFUL MEMORY**  
**OF**  
**SISTER MARY MELETIA**

0-10-108

.

.

.

—



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

CHAPTER I		PAGE
INTRODUCTION.....		1
CHAPTER II		
THE CREATION OF THE GEORGIC TYPE.....		9
1. Vergil's <i>Georgics</i> , their relation to the <i>Works and Days</i> of Hesiod.....		9
2. Subject matter of the <i>Georgics</i> .....		13
CHAPTER III		
THE RELATION OF THE GEORGIC TO THE PASTORAL....		19
1. Distinction between the Georgic and the Pastoral		19
2. The Pastoral, a literary type of frequent occurrence, made famous by great poets; the Georgic, a literary type coincidentally neglected.....		26
3. Variations in the development of the Georgic compared with variations in the development of the Eclogue.....		37
4. Variations of the Georgic classified.....		47
CHAPTER IV		
DIDACTIC POEMS ON GENERAL AGRICULTURE.....		51
1. Early Italian Poems on Agriculture.....		51
2. Early English non-Vergilian <i>Georgics</i> .....		52
3. Sixteenth-Century Italian Poems on Agriculture		59
4. Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Poems on Agriculture.....		68

## CHAPTER V

DIDACTIC POEMS ON GARDENS.....	75
1. From Columella to William Mason.....	75
2. William Mason's "The English Garden" and Delille's "Jardins".....	84
3. Louis de Fontanes' "Maison Rustique." Its rela- tion to Delille's "Jardins" and the fashion of the English landscape garden.....	90
4. Cowper's georgic on the "Garden"; William Knight's didactic poem, "The Landscape".....	94

## CHAPTER VI

DIDACTIC POEMS ON FIELD SPORTS.....	101
I. Of Hunting.....	102
1. Grattius, Oppian, and Nemesianus.....	102
2. Medieval Poems on the Chase.....	110
3. Sixteenth-Century Didactics on the Chase.....	116
4. Eighteenth-Century Didactics on the Chase.....	124
II. Of Fishing. The Halieutic.....	135
1. Oppian of Cilicia.....	135
2. John Dennys' "Secrets of Angling".....	142
3. Later Seventeenth-Century Didactic Poems on Angling.....	151
4. Eighteenth-Century Didactic Poems on Fishing..	153
5. Nineteenth-Century Didactic Poems on Angling..	165

## CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION.....	170
-----------------	-----

## PREFACE

---

This contribution to the study of the Vergilian type of didactic poetry was begun at the Johns Hopkins University at the suggestion of Professor James W. Bright; the first chapters were written and published, in part fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

The subject that I have undertaken is a large one, leading into many almost untouched fields. The little that I have accomplished is hardly more than an introduction to the subject. I have regretted to leave unstudied so many developments of the georgic, particularly in Italian literature; however, altho I have worked badly, I have hoped that I might awaken in others, who can work well, an interest in this curious and long-neglected type of poetry.

I wish to make grateful acknowledgment to Mr. Hyder E. Rollins, who very kindly read for me at Harvard rare editions of John Lawrence's *Paradise Regained, or The Art of Gardening*, and Charles Clifford's *The British Angler*, interesting poems that would otherwise have been inaccessible to me; and to Professor Wilfrid P. Mustard, whose untiring aid has been invaluable to me, not only in the use of Greek and Latin materials, but at every other point connected with my work. Finally, I wish to thank Professor Bright, to whom I owe chiefly what little may be of worth in this study. My faults in workmanship, particularly in the last chapters written amidst many difficulties and interruptions, I regret, mainly, because they indicate so great a departure from the ideals of scholarship that I have acquired under his guidance and inspiration.

Dominican College, San Rafael, California.

March 26, 1919.



# THE GEORGIC

---

## CHAPTER I

---

### INTRODUCTION

In 1697, Addison in his "Essay on the Georgics"<sup>1</sup> complains of the neglect of these poems and of their confusion with the pastoral. "There has been abundance of criticism spent on Virgil's *Pastorals* and *Aeneids*," he writes, "but the *Georgics* are a subject which none of the critics have sufficiently taken into their consideration, most of them passing it over in silence, or casting it under the same head with *Pastoral*—a division by no means proper, unless we suppose the style of a Husbandman ought to be imitated in a *Georgic*, as that of a shepherd is in *Pastoral*. But though the scene of both these Poems lies in the same place; the speakers in them are of a quite different character, since the precepts of husbandry are not to be delivered with the simplicity of a Plowman, but with the address of a Poet. No rules therefore that relate to *Pastoral*, can any way affect the *Georgics*, since they fall under that class of Poetry, which consists in giving plain and direct instructions to the reader; whether they be Moral duties, as those of *Theognis* and *Pythagoras*; or Philosophical Speculations, as those of *Ara-tus* and *Lucretius*; or Rules of practice, as those of *Hesiod* and *Virgil*."

One can hardly agree with Addison that the critics have neglected Vergil's *Georgics*; and there is evidence that from their first appearance the didactics that rival the *De Rerum Natura* were not denied due honor. The long list of translations, and the various editions of the *Georgics* annotated in many lan-

<sup>1</sup> This essay was contributed anonymously as an introduction to Dryden's translation of the *Georgics*. It was written as early as 1693. See Hurd's note, *The Works of Addison*, ed. Bohn, London, 1862, p. 154.



guages bear witness to the devoted labor spent on Vergil's agricultural treatises. Various recent publications,<sup>2</sup> moreover, testify to the living interest in the poems that have been pronounced the most finished product of antiquity. But, so far as I am able to discover, of the georgic as a type, closely related to the pastoral, although essentially different from it, nothing definite or detailed has been written in English since Addison's complaint in 1697. As for French critics, they seem also to have neglected the subject of the georgic as a type. Collections of Italian georgics have been edited<sup>3</sup> and there is some Italian criticism on the georgic poetry of Italy,<sup>4</sup> but unfortunately neither these collections of "Italian Georgics," nor the critical essays have so far been accessible to me: of the latter I know only what is conveyed by the titles.

One cannot say that, like the georgic, the pastoral has been neglected. With finer understanding of the subject than that which is manifest in the age of Addison, the critics have continued to discuss the imitations of Vergil and of Theocritus. Symonds,<sup>5</sup> with justice, refers to "the whole hackneyed question of Bucolic poetry." Certainly no student can remain ignorant of the pastoral as a type, of its origin, of its characteristics, of its developments as a literary *genre*, of the recurring periods of favor and disfavor through which it has passed. But if, incidentally, the critics touch upon the difference in type between the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics* of Vergil, it is usually to

<sup>2</sup> Meta Glass, *The Fusion of Stylistic Elements in Vergil's Georgics*, N. Y., Columbia Univ., 1913; T. F. Royd, *The Beasts, Birds, and Bees of Vergil: a naturalist's handbook to the Georgics*, with a preface by W. Warde Fowler, Oxford, B. H. Blackwell, 1914; T. C. Williams, *The Georgics and Eclogues of Vergil*, with an introd. by G. H. Palmer, Harvard Univ. Press, 1915; *Les Géorgiques*, Texte Latin, par Paul Lejay, Paris, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> *I Poemi Georgici*, Francesco Bonsignori, Lucca, 1785; Giovanni Silvestri, Milano, 1826.

✓ <sup>4</sup> Felippo Re, *Della poesia georgica degli Italiani*, Bologna, 1809; L. Girardelli, *Dei poemi georgici nostrali*, Gorizia, 1900; D. Merlini's *Saggio di ricerche sulla satira contro il villano*, Torino, Loscher, 1894, probably treats of poems that fall under the head of mock-georgics.

<sup>5</sup> J. A. Symonds, *Studies of the Greek Poets*, London, 1902, Vol. II, p. 245.

notice the superiority of workmanship in the latter, or to contrast the general character of the two series of poems. Sellar,<sup>6</sup> for example, observes that Vergil was marked among his contemporaries as the poet of Nature and rural life. The *Eclogues*, he observes, are of a light type; the general Roman spirit demanded of its highest literature that it should have either some direct practical use or contribute in some way to the sense of national greatness. Glover<sup>7</sup> discusses the difference in spirit between the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*: "the great note" of the *Eclogues*, youthful happiness, the life of the Shepherd, an easy life, touched sometimes by youthful grief that is never inconsolable; in the *Georgics*, "the grim realization that life involves a great deal more work than Menalcas and the rest had thought, hard work all the year round, vigilance never to be remitted, and labor which it is ruin to relax." In general, however, the commentators seem to take it for granted that the reader will perceive of necessity the essential difference between the two types. Yet one continually finds that, in spite of Addison's emphatic protest, students confuse the georgic with the pastoral.

Of the few writings that I have been able to discover on the imitations of the *Georgics* there is almost nothing that is of any value as a study of the type. In Conington's edition of Vergil,<sup>8</sup> there is a section on the "Later Didactic Poets of Rome," an essay that is valuable in the history of the georgic, and that gives a general idea of the manner in which the Vergilian model was imitated from the earliest period. A piece of work entitled *Virgilio nella storia della Poesia Didascalica Latina*, by D. Renzi,<sup>9</sup> promises valuable information; but I have been unable to consult it. Dunlop<sup>10</sup> has some comments on a few of the

<sup>6</sup> W. Y. Sellar, *The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, Virgil*, Oxford, 1908, pp. 174 ff.

<sup>7</sup> T. R. Glover, *Studies in Vergil*, London, Methuen and Co., 1904, pp. 30 ff.

<sup>8</sup> J. Conington, *The Works of Vergil*, London, 1872, Vol. I, p. 389.

<sup>9</sup> Avella, 1907.

<sup>10</sup> J. Dunlop, *History of Roman Lit. during the Augustan Age*. London, 1828. Vol. III, pp. 138 ff.



imitations of the *Georgics*, but his remarks are even more general respecting the type than those of Conington. For example, he observes that "The *Rusticus* of Politian 'in *Virgilio Georgicon enarratione pronunciata*' is an abridgement of the subject of that poem and several passages are nearly copied from it." After having briefly considered several other imitations, he comments on the great debt of Thomson to Vergil and points out passages in the *Seasons*, imitated, or almost translated, from the *Georgics*.

Ginguené<sup>11</sup> has a valuable chapter on the Italian didactics of the sixteenth century. He sketches briefly the contents of most of the Italian georgics of the period, but altho he comments generally on the fact that these poems follow Vergil as a model, he says nothing of their particular adaptations of the features peculiar to the georgic type. Incidentally, he shows that other writers, who have considered imitations of the *Georgics*, have done so carelessly. An enthusiastic admirer of Luigi Alamanni's *Coltivazione*, Ginguené protests against the French neglect of this important poem, a work written and first published in France. In particular he reproaches Jacques Delille, Saint-Lambert, and a certain de Rosset. Delille is scored, because, in the introduction to his translation of the *Georgics*, he announces that he cannot refrain from speaking of the poems for which Vergil has furnished the idea and the model, after which announcement, he considers Vanière's *Praedium Rusticum*, Rapin's *Jardins*, Thomson's *Seasons*, and Saint-Lambert's *Saisons*, without mentioning Luigi Alamanni. Saint-Lambert is reproached, because, in his *discours préliminaire*,<sup>12</sup> he writes of the *Georgics* of Vergil and of *les Géorgiques plus détaillées de Vanière*, and neglects the opportunity of speaking of the georgics of Alamanni. De Rosset is complained against, because, in an

<sup>11</sup> P. L. Ginguené, *Hist. Lit. d'Italie*, Paris, 1824, 2e ed. T. 9, ch. xxxv, pp. 1 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Ginguené assumes that the reader is familiar with this work: he does not state where it is to be found. See J. F. Saint-Lambert, *Les Saisons*, "Discours Préliminaire," Paris, 1795.

introductory discourse on georgic poetry prefixed to a poem on agriculture,<sup>13</sup> he writes at length on Hesiod and at still greater length on Vergil, after which he passes abruptly to Rapin and Vanière, without seeming to know that another georgic poet (Alamanni) had existed in the meantime.

Saint-Lambert's discussion<sup>14</sup> is of no value as a study of the georgic type as a whole, but it is important in the history of the development of the eighteenth century variation of the type due to Thomson's *Seasons*. Delille's introduction<sup>15</sup> is of interest, since he makes a defense of the georgic. He also considers Vanière's *Praedium Rusticum* very briefly and compares it with Vergil's *Georgics*, not, however, with any reference to Vanière's use of the distinctive features of the Vergilian type. This is followed by some general criticism of Rapin's *Gardens*, and Thomson's *Seasons*, and mention is made of the existence of two other poems on the seasons by French writers who are not named. Delille's preface to *L'Homme des Champs*<sup>16</sup> is of interest with respect to the broad meaning of the word "georgic" in French poems of this class, but the French critic is no more detailed in his discussion of this type than he is in the introduction to his translation of the *Georgics*. Whether Rosset's discourse is of value or not, I am unable to say, for his work is inaccessible to me.

In histories of Italian literature,<sup>17</sup> there occur brief notices of Italian didactics, and of Italian georgics, among the latter

<sup>13</sup> The reader's familiarity with de Rosset, as with Saint-Lambert, is assumed. For a notice of the life of Pierre Fulcrand de Rosset, who died at Paris, in 1788, the author of a poem on agriculture in nine books, the first six of which appeared at Paris in 1744, the complete edition at Lausanne, in 1806, cp. Pierre Larousse, *Dict. Univ. de la XIXe Siècle*, T. 13, p. 1302.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>15</sup> J. Delille, *Œuvres, Les Géorgiques*, Vol. I, "Discours Préliminaire," ed. P. F. Tissot, Paris, 1832-33.

<sup>16</sup> J. Delille, *L'Homme des Champs, ou Les Géorgiques Françaises*, Paris, 1805, p. 18.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, G. Tiraboschi, *Stor. della Lett. Ital. Milano*, 1822-26. T. v., p. 864, T. vi, p. 1428, T. vii, pp. 1780, 1786 ff., T. xiii, pp. 2119, 2136, 2137 ff. *Stor. Lett. d'Ital.*, Milano, F. Flamini, "Il Cinquecento," pp.



being considered only poems that treat of agricultural subjects. Concerning the relation of these poems to Vergil's didactics, we are told at most, however, that they are written in imitation of the *Georgics*.

Flamini cites a study of Valvasone's *Caccia*<sup>18</sup> that is probably of value; but I have been unable to see it. Cavicchi<sup>19</sup> shows definitely the relations between Vergil and Rucellai, but he does not consider Rucellai's use of the chief features of the georgic type. Altho Ginguené complains of the French neglect of Alamanni, more appears to have been written on *La Coltivazione* than on any other Italian didactic. In a valuable Verona edition of Alamanni's *Coltivazione* and Rucellai's *Api*, published 1745, the Vergilian borrowings and imitations are cited in the annotations of Giuseppe Bianchini da Prato on *La Coltivazione* and of Roberto Tito on *Le Api*. Gaspary mentions several studies of *La Coltivazione*<sup>20</sup> that I have been unable to see. Hauvette<sup>21</sup> considers the poem in detail, commenting on its relation to Vergil's *Georgics*, but beyond remarking that Alamanni scorns the digressions which are so important a part of Vergil's poems, he does not discuss the conventions of the georgic.

Most historians of French literature are silent concerning French georgics; histories of English literature have almost nothing to say of English georgics. Prefaces to English

110, 440-2, 538, 574; T. Concari, "Il Settecento," 272, 237, 277, 278; G. Mazzoni, "L'Ottocento," 78, 774. A. Gaspary, *Stor. della Lett. Ital.*, tr. dal Tedesco da Nicolo Zingarelli, Torino, 1887, V, II, pt. II, pp. 142 ff., 197, 319.

<sup>18</sup> L. Pizzio, *La poesia didascalica e la "Caccia" di E. da Valvasone*, Udine, 1892.

<sup>19</sup> F. Cavicchi, *Il Libro IV delle Georgiche di Virgilio e "Le Api" di G. Rucellai*, Teramo, 1900.

<sup>20</sup> F. Caccialanza, *Le Georgiche di Virgilio e la "Coltivazione" di Luigi Alamanni*, Susa, 1892; G. Naro, *L'Alamanni e la Coltivazione*, Siracusa, 1897; L. Girardelli, *Dei poemi georgici nostrali ed in particolare della Coltivazione di L. Alamanni*, Gorizia, 1900, cp. above, p. 2.

<sup>21</sup> H. Hauvette, *Luigi Alamanni (1495-1566), sa vie et son œuvre*, Paris, 1903, pp. 263 ff.



imitations of the *Georgics* sometimes contain more or less general references to Vergil<sup>22</sup> as the model followed; occasionally British borrowings from Vergil are noted by the borrowers themselves.<sup>23</sup> No critic can pass over Thomson's debt to Vergil in *The Seasons*. Logie Robertson<sup>24</sup> has some important comments on it. Macaulay<sup>25</sup> dwells upon it at greater length; and Otto Zippel<sup>26</sup> in his variorum edition of *The Seasons* notes the resemblances and borrowings with all their changes, line for line. Lejay<sup>27</sup> discussing French imitations of the *Georgics* writes suggestively of the influence of Thomson's *Seasons* in helping to make agriculture a mode in French literature. He remarks briefly on the translations and poems of Delille, on *Les Saisons* of Saint-Lambert, and on *Les Mois* of Roucher. But no one has studied Thomson's *Seasons* as a development of the georgic type, the chief model of those eighteenth century "géorgiques françaises" that represent no attempt to convey practical instructions, but still illustrate almost all the motives of Vergil's *Georgics*. Professor W. P. Mustard has contributed an article on "Vergil's *Georgics* and the British Poets,"<sup>28</sup> in which he points out definitely almost every passage in British literature echoing or imitating the *Georgics*, gives a list of English poems "professedly or manifestly" imitations of the Vergilian didactics, and notes a number of the favorite Vergilian conventions; but it does not fall within his purpose to discuss the georgic as a literary type.

It would require prolonged investigation to prepare one's self for a complete treatise on the georgic as a type. In my restricted study of the subject I shall attempt, first, to define the

<sup>22</sup> Cp. Somerville, Preface to *The Chase*; Akenside, *The Pleasures of the Imagination*.

<sup>23</sup> Cp. Cowper, footnote to *The Task*, III, 429, a misquotation of *Georg.* II, 82; Gray's note on *Ode to Spring*.

<sup>24</sup> *Thomson's Seasons and Castle of Indolence*, Oxford, 1891.

<sup>25</sup> G. C. Macaulay, *James Thomson*, London, Macmillan & Co., 1908.

<sup>26</sup> *Palæstra*, LXVI.

<sup>27</sup> *Op. cit.*, Introd., p. xxxvii.

<sup>28</sup> *Am. J. Phil.*, XXIX, 1 ff.

georgic as a type and to study it with special reference to its relation to the pastoral; second, to sketch the most prominent features of the historical development of the georgic; third, to write in detail, so far as my material permits, the history of English georgics that treat of general agriculture, of gardens and of field sports, discussing also to some extent the didactics on these themes that occur in French and in Italian.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> My information concerning the subject in Spanish and German is casual, since I have excluded both literatures from the range of my study. I am not aware of any georgics in Spanish; and the type, except as it is developed in Thomson's *Seasons*, seems to have found little favor among German writers. For the influence of Thompson's *Seasons* on German literature, cp. K. Gjerset, *Der Einfluss von James Thomson's "Jahreszeiten" auf die deutsche Literatur des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*. Heidelberg, 1898.

## CHAPTER II

## THE CREATION OF THE GEORGIC TYPE

1. Vergil's *Georgics*: Their Relation to the *Works and Days* of Hesiod.

The pastoral has come down to us from Theocritus, largely thru Vergil. The georgic, also, originated with the Greeks. Varro<sup>1</sup> names many writers among the Greeks who wrote of agriculture. Some, he says, treated the same subject in verse, as for example, Hesiod of Ascra, and Menecrates of Ephesus. The verses of Menecrates however, remain mere tradition. Of Nicander's *Georgics*,<sup>2</sup> there are left only fragments that in no way confirm the suggestion of Quintilian,<sup>3</sup> that Vergil followed him; nor do any other critics point out that Vergil owes more to Nicander than the borrowings from the *Theriaca*.<sup>4</sup> The georgic may be said to have originated with the *Works and Days* of Hesiod, but it has come down to us as a literary form thru Vergil, whose *Georgics* owe far less to Hesiod than his *Eclogues* owe to Theocritus. The *Eclogues* are little more than artificial copies, often mere translations, of Theocritus; yet the world does not fail to acknowledge the charm with which Vergil has invested them as his own. Names as great as those of Horace, Milton, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Macaulay, are found in the list of their admirers; but none the less, not only the literary conventions, but also much that is best in them,

<sup>1</sup> Varro on Farming. Translated by Lloyd Storr-Best, London, G. Bell & Sons, 1912, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Nicander lived in the 2nd c. B. C. The fragments of his lost works are edited with a Latin translation by A. F. Didot, *Poetae Bucolici et Didactici. Grace et Latine*. Paris, 1862, p. 157.

<sup>3</sup> *Instit. Orat.*, x, 1, 56.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. T. E. Page, *P Vergili Maronis Bucolica et Georgica*, Macmillan and Co., 1910, notes on *Georg.* III, 425, 430, 513.



Vergil owes to Theocritus. Even the landscape portrayed in them may sometimes be recognized as that of Sicily.

Many influences were at work in the poems that Sellar declares to be 'almost the only specimens of didactic poetry that the world cares to read.' And there is much of Hesiod in Vergil; but it is Vergil, not Hesiod, who created the literary form of the georgic.

Some idea of the *Works and Days* may be had from the title page of Chapman's Translation,<sup>5</sup> "The Georgicks of Hesiod, by George Chapman: Translated elaborately out of the Greek. Containing Doctrine of Husbandrie, Morality and Piety, with a perpetual calendar of Good and Bad Daies; Not Superstitious, but necessary (as far as natural causes compell) for all men to observe, and difference in following their affaires." More tersely, Aristophanes sums up the matter (*The Frogs*, 1033, translated by Hookham Frere):

Next came old Hesiod, teaching us husbandry,  
Ploughing, and sowing, and rural affairs,  
Rural economy, rural astronomy,  
Homely morality, labor and thrift.

Hesiod does not purport to write a systematic treatise on agriculture. He begins by invoking the Muses, and continues with a personal address to Perses, his brother, who has wronged him, and seems in need of advice. Here ensues a moralization on strife; then the story of Pandora is told, in explanation of the necessity of toil, and of the difficulties of life. From this, arises an account of the Golden Age, and the evil days that followed thereafter. Perses is exhorted to justice and work, and is given various wise counsels. Then the poet cries, "Now if thy heart in thy breast is set on wealth, do thou thus and work one work upon another"; an interesting introduction to what may be called the only purely georgic part of the *Works and Days*, for the labors that are to bring Perses wealth are the labors of the husbandman. Hesiod follows his exhortation by

<sup>5</sup> London, 1618.

a series of desultory precepts concerning husbandry; when to plow and how to plow, what signs to follow, what evils to avoid. After this, he proceeds with advice concerning seafaring, the time to marry, the pouring of libations to the gods, and other miscellaneous matters. Then follows a calendar of lucky and unlucky days, and the poem concludes, "Therein happy and blessed is he, who knowing all these things, worketh his work, blameless before the deathless gods, reading omens and avoiding sin."

From this sketch it may be seen that Hesiod's poem is not a carefully planned, artistically perfect structure. Even through the medium of a prose translation,<sup>6</sup> nevertheless, the work has a singular charm. In Chapman's couplets, much of this is inevitably lost; but in Professor Mair's prose, the freshness, the vigor of style, the personality of the poet, carry the reader back to earlier ages when philosophy walked in homely garb, and the world learned as yet little from libraries, much from life. Hesiod is counsellor, husbandman, and poet. Stories of gods and men he knows, superstitions, perhaps for all his scorn of women, old wives' tales. He has lived in the fields, has learned the signs that Nature has set for man to read, and he is at home with the winds and the stars.

Vergil grew up among the woods and plains of Italy, a country boy with a poet's soul, a poet's clear-sighted eyes, and finely attuned hearing. But he became conversant with the learning of his day. He absorbed the teaching of generations of poets and philosophers; and at the beginning of his poetic career the glory of Lucretius was still new. He professes to sing the song of Hesiod,<sup>7</sup> and he builds upon the model of Lucretius. He enriches his poems with wisdom gleaned from writers on natural history and astronomy, and makes them practical by sound precepts, drawn not only from his own experience, but from the tested writings of authorities such as the Carthaginian Mago, the Greeks Democritus and Xenophon, the Latins Cato

<sup>6</sup> *Hesiod*, translated by A. W. Mair, Oxford, 1908.

<sup>7</sup> *Ascræumque cano Romana per oppida carmen*, *Georg.* II, 176.



and Varro. And he writes steeped in the inspiration of Lucretius. But the life that he depicts is the life that he knew, Italian life against a background of Italian landscape. In the making of his poems he reveals himself a reader of books, a lover of philosophy, but a greater lover of his native land; a good husbandman, and a wise giver of advice, but over and above everything a great poet.

An account of the sources of the *Georgics* may be read in any important history of Roman literature, and in most of the detailed studies of Vergil's work. His indebtedness may be traced in detail, thru various scholarly editions of the *Georgics*. Sellar's book is particularly valuable with regard to the relations between Vergil and Lucretius, and to the part that Maecenas played in the composition of the poems. Maecenas probably had some influence in Vergil's choice of a subject peculiarly suited to the policy of the times, a policy begun with the ill-fated efforts of the Gracchi. Luxury and vice had inevitably followed in the wake of Roman conquest. Long civil wars had torn the country, and men loved the soldier's life of daring and adventure better than steady quiet, the routine of the farmer's toil. The city's lure was probably very much then what it is now. Moreover, during the long wars, there had been times when the regular government was almost suspended. 'Right had become wrong, and wrong right; the fields lay waste, their cultivators being taken away, and the crooked scythes forged into swords' (*Georg.* I, 505-8). Only a revival of the ancient Roman principles could restore the ancient Roman greatness. A new theme was offered to the poet. 'Others that in song might have held frivolous minds were now all grown commonplace' (*Georg.* III, 2-4). Vergil felt the inspiration, and so composed the poems that were to celebrate the arts of peace, the glorification of honest toil, the praises of his native land.

Naturally, the didactic was the form selected for the poem. It has been suggested that Vergil was fired by a desire to become the Hesiod,<sup>8</sup> as he was already the Theocritus, of the

<sup>8</sup> Cp. Sellar, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

Romans. And in the *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius had shown the great possibilities of didactic poetry. With utmost reverence for the work of Lucretius, but with fine understanding of his own powers, Vergil gave himself to the writing of the *Georgics*, perfecting the meter that Lucretius had suggested to him, and adapting Lucretius' plan to his own needs.

## 2. *Subject Matter of the Georgics*

The *Georgics* are written in four books, each a complete poem, dealing, as the name implies, with a subject connected with agricultural pursuits. The first book treats of the preparation of the soil; the second of planting, grafting and pruning; the third of cattle; the fourth of bees.

The subject matter of the poems may be analyzed as follows:

### Book I

- 1-5. Address to Maecenas, announcing the subjects of the four poems.
- 5-42. Address to the rural deities; Augustus eulogized, named as one of the gods.
- 43-63. Of preparing soils; the time to sow; of winds and other variations of the weather. Products peculiar to different soils. Digression on foreign countries and their products. Allusion to the story of Deucalion.
- 63-70. The time to plow.
- 71-117. Of alternating crops; treatment of poor lands.
- 117-159. Annoyances that harass the farmer, due to Father Jove's desire to strengthen men by teaching them the use of their powers. Of the Golden Age.\*  
Necessity of constant work, warfare and prayer.

\* In his treatment of the Golden Age, Vergil partly follows Hesiod in accepting it as a former age, carefree and happy. But Hesiod regards the passing of the Golden Age as a punishment of the gods for the theft of Prometheus; just as the Biblical tradition makes the loss of Eden a

- 160-175. Farm implements described.
- 176-230. Precepts concerning precautions against various annoyances; the signs of a good season; the preparation of seeds; necessity for observation of the constellations.
- 231-259. Episode of the five zones.
- 259-275. Labors that may be done in wet weather; on holy days.
- 276-286. Of favorable and unfavorable days.
- 287-310. Winter relaxations and occupations.
- 311-334. Of autumn tempests; a storm described.
- 335-350. Fearing the elements, observe the skies, venerate the gods; offer the annual rites to Ceres; Ceres' rites <sup>10</sup> described.
- 351-464. Weather signs; warnings of the sun and moon.
- 465-497. Signs and omens attending Cæsar's death. Horrors of the resulting civil war.
- 498-514. Prayer to the gods to preserve Cæsar to save a lost and ruined age, wherein the plow has none of its due honor, and mad Mars rages over all the globe.

## Book II

- 1-8. Preceding subject stated; new subject announced. Bacchus invoked.
- 9-90. Varieties of trees; best method of cultivating different varieties.
- 91-109. Great variety of vines; impossibility of naming all.
- 110-135. Products peculiar to different regions; to foreign lands.

punishment for the eating of the forbidden apple. Vergil's conception is nobler, his practical philosophy bears a curious analogy to the apostolic teaching of the strengthening power of tribulation. This may or may not be the core of Vergil's religious belief, but it is the most characteristic passage of the *Georgics*, emphasizing the central theme of the poem,—the necessity and the value of hardships and continual labor.

<sup>10</sup> The Ambarvalia.



- 136-176. Panegyric of Italy, blessed above all other lands.  
177-258. Of soils; different qualities adapted to different products; of testing soils.  
259-314. Methods and time of planting and pruning.  
315-345. Descriptive episode—of Spring.  
346-370. Further precepts concerning the care of vines and trees.  
371-379. Of protecting the vine from cattle, especially from the wild goat.  
380-396. Digression—of the sacrifice of the goat to Bacchus; rural feasts in Bacchus' honor.  
397-419. Of the husbandman's recurring labor.  
420-458. Gifts that earth supplies of herself, or in return for little care. Various uses of trees, gifts better than those of Bacchus. Allusion to the battle of the Centaurs.  
459-474. The blessings of country life contrasted with the troubled luxuries of cities.  
475-494. Prayer to the Muses—first, that the poet be granted to know the causes of things. This denied, the love of woods and streams and fields. He is blest who has cast aside superstition and the fear of death, but he is blest also who knows the rural gods.  
495-540. Continuation of the praise of country life; the life led by the Romans of old, whereby their country became the greatest of the earth.  
541-542. Conclusion,—But we have travelled over an immense space; it is time to loosen the reeking necks of our steeds.

### Book III

- 1-9. Subject stated, cattle and their guardian deities; necessity of choosing a new theme.  
10-39. A future poem allegorically described.  
40-48. Meanwhile the subject requested by Maecenas (no light task), must be pursued.

- 49-102. Of breeding cattle. (66-68, A mournful reflection interposed on the quick passing of the best in human life.)
- 103-145. A chariot race described; of chariot racing.
- 146-156. Of the gadfly; allusion to the story of Ino.
- 157-208. Of training calves and colts.
- 209-283. Ill effects of blind love on man and beast.
- 284-285. But meanwhile time flies, as beguiled by love of the subject we linger upon each detail.
- 286-288. Enough of flocks, the task remains to treat of woolly sheep and shaggy goats.
- 289-293. The poet realizes the difficulty of his subject, but his cherished desire leads him to the neglected heights of Parnassus, where no poet has trodden before.
- 294-321. The care of sheep and goats, especially in winter.
- 322-338. A shepherd's summer day, from the first appearance of the morning star to the rising of cool Vesper and the dewy moon.
- 339-383. Shepherd life in foreign lands, in the tropics and in the arctic regions.
- 384-403. Precautions in the securing of wool; of milk.
- 404-413. Advice not to neglect the care of dogs; the value of dogs as protectors and in the chase.
- 414-439. The care of folds; pests that must be destroyed.
- 440-469. Causes and signs of distress among sheep; preventives and remedies.
- 470-532. Frequency of plagues among cattle; description of a cattle plague.

#### Book IV

- 1-7. Subject announced; "The divine gift of aerial honey."
- 8-32. Of sites for hives.
- 33-50. Of hives.
- 51-66. Of hiving swarms.
- 67-87. Battles among the bees; how to check such contests.

- 88-102. Of choosing the victorious leader, and the better subjects.
- 103-115. Of plucking the King's wings to prevent battle; of inviting the bees with gardens.
- 116-148. Were the work not so nearly ended the poet might sing of gardens, for he remembers the wonders wrought by a poor old man of Tarentum, with his garden and his hives; but prevented by limited space he must leave the task to others.<sup>11</sup>
- 149-218. Natural qualities and instincts of bees. Their community life; their customs.
- 219-227. Beliefs in pantheism and immortality held by some as a result of the intelligence observed in bees.
- 228-250. Of collecting honey.
- 251-280. Care of sick bees.
- 281-558. Of recovering the loss of a whole stock of bees. Episode of Aristaeus, whose bees were destroyed in punishment of his crime against Eurydice.
- 559-566. Conclusion. Reference to composition of the *Eclogues*.

The foregoing outline may give some idea of the difficulties and of the possibilities of the georgic. For me to attempt a criticism of Vergil's work would be alike unnecessary and unprofitable; the world has too long justified the truth of the poet's words (*Georg.* iv, 5-6):

in tenui labor; at tenuis non gloria, si quem  
numina laeva sinunt auditque vocatus Apollo.

The arguments for and against didactic poetry need no repetition. Even those most prejudiced can not deny Vergil's success. The heaviest charge brought against him is that he is not concerned to make his teachings practical, but that he uses homely details only as a foil to poetic situations and de-

<sup>11</sup> "A graceful interpolation, sketching what might have been a fifth Georgic."—Conington, *op. cit.*

scriptions.<sup>12</sup> There is testimony, however, that even Vergil's most prosaic teachings have been read with delight; and Page<sup>13</sup> notes a curious proof of the neglect of the valuable matter contained in the *Georgics*. According to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*,<sup>14</sup> at the beginning of the eighteenth century the alternation of crops was just becoming a common practice in England, a great improvement upon the previous and common usage of exhausting the land and then letting it recover its strength by lying fallow. In *Georg.* I, 7-83, this improved system had been recommended by Vergil eighteen centuries before.

It is probably true that no peasant ever drew material profit from the *Georgics*, and it is certainly true that Vergil's poems are not addressed to the uneducated. But a proof that the *Georgics* have been of influence in life as well as literature may be had from the statement of Pierre Larousse<sup>15</sup> that the leaning towards agriculture of the learned Italian scientific farmer, Felippo Re, was decided by the reading of Vergil's *Georgics*.

---

<sup>12</sup> Cp. T. DeQuincey, "The Poetry of Pope," *The Collected Writings*, ed. D. Masson, Edinburgh, 1890, vol. XI, p. 91.

<sup>13</sup> *Op. cit.*, Introd., xxxvii.

<sup>14</sup> S. v., Agriculture, c. 2, § 1.

<sup>15</sup> *Grand. Dict. Univ. du XIXe Siècle*, T. 13.

## CHAPTER III

## THE RELATION OF THE GEORGIC TO THE PASTORAL

1. *Distinction between the Georgic and the Pastoral*

The etymology of the term *pastoral* is a guide to the narrower meaning of the word, a meaning still given in the *Century Dictionary*,—"Pastoral, a poem describing the life and manners of shepherds." But *pastoral* is used also to characterize any literature that describes a simple rural life, such as Burns' *Cotter's Saturday Night*, or Walton's *Compleat Angler*, which Hazlitt<sup>1</sup> calls "the best pastoral in our language."

*Eclogue*, 'a selection,' and *idyll*, 'a little picture,' or 'a little poem,' would seem broader in meaning than *pastoral*. But thruout English literature all three terms have been generally used as synonyms; hence the development of the incongruous types of so-called pastorals, and eclogues, and idylls, such for example as the pastoral elegy, the allegorical eclogue or pastoral, the piscatory eclogue, and the town eclogue.<sup>2</sup> Theocritus' poems are named *Idylls*. But Cowley<sup>3</sup> in his essay *Of Agriculture*, writes, "Theocritus (a very ancient poet, but he was one of our tribe, for he wrote nothing but Pastorals)," altho as Mr. Kerlin says, half the idylls of Theocritus are not poems of rural life.

Vergil, presumably, called his imitations of Theocritus *Bucolics*,<sup>4</sup> and in *Georg.* iv, 565, he alludes to them as "*carmina pastorum*." According to Page, the grammarians probably gave them the name *eclogues*. The indiscriminate use as syno-

<sup>1</sup> W. Hazlitt, "On John Bunce." *The Round Table; a Collection of Essays on Literature, Men, and Manners*, 3rd ed., London, 1841.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. R. T. Kerlin, *Theocritus in Eng. Lit.*, Lynchburg, Va., 1910, App. 2, p. 181.

<sup>3</sup> A. Cowley, *Essays and Other Prose Writings*, ed. by Alfred B. Gough, Oxford, 1915, p. 141.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Page, *op. cit.*, Introd., x, n. 1 and n. 2.



nyms of the four terms, Idyll, Bucolic, Eclogue, and Pastoral, seems therefore based on Roman authority, a fact which Mr. Kerlin fails to mention. Vergil's "*carmina pastorum*" and his *Georgics* are usually edited together, either as *Bucolics and Georgics*, or as *Eclogues and Georgics*. This may be one reason why the pastoral and the georgic are still so frequently confused; another reason may be due to the fact that the fashions of the pastoral, as of the georgic, owe so much to Vergil.

Georgic<sup>5</sup> means literally 'earth-work,' or 'field-work,' hence a poem that treats of work in the fields, of husbandry, or more broadly, of rural occupations. According to Addison,<sup>6</sup> "the *Georgic* deals with rules of practice. A kind of poetry that addresses itself wholly to the imagination; it is altogether conversant among the fields and woods, and has the most delightful part of Nature for its province. It raises in our minds a pleasing variety of scenes and landscapes, while it teaches us, and makes the dryest of its precepts look like a description. A *Georgic* therefore is some part of the science of husbandry, put into a pleasing dress, and set off with all the beauties and embellishments of poetry."

In noting that the georgic deals with rural occupations its agreement with the pastoral is seen at once. Both have the same background, and shepherd life may be depicted in both. In both one finds the element of delight in country life. But in Addison's definition the words "science" and "rules of practice," strike at once a vital difference. The georgic, as Vergil planned it, purports to instruct scientifically by means of technical terms and a use of practical details. The writer, speaking in the first person, recounts his experience for the reader's benefit, incidentally making use of various ornamental devices. The pastoral, as Theocritus and Vergil left the form, never

<sup>5</sup> Gk. γῆ, the earth, root ἐργ of ἐργον work. It is interesting to note that altho Vergil goes to the Greeks for the names of his poems, he does not owe them either to Hesiod or Theocritus. Chapman called his translation "The Georgicks of Hesiod," after Vergil. Vergil probably owes the name to Nicander.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*

assumes directly the purpose of instructing. It is most often dramatic in nature, and the characters are frequently represented as speaking, or singing, often in dialogue. The shepherd of Vergil's pastoral does not suggest the idea of toil. Neither is he bowed under the weight of responsibility, troubled unduly by the doubtful blessing of ownership and family cares. He does not scruple to neglect his sheep for love of some scornful maid; often he watches over the possessions of another, and he does not dare even to wager a fat lamb, if an inconvenient step-mother waits at home to take count of the returning flocks. He has his share of grievances, but his occupation is one wherein he may pass joyous and comparatively idle hours, in which, like Tityrus reclining under the shade of a spreading beech, he meditates the woodland muse on his slender reed.

The pastoral themes are few, the singing match, the dirge, the love lay, the conventional forms fixed by Theocritus and imitated by Vergil, who "by including among his Bucolic pieces the famous 'Pollio'"<sup>1</sup> added thereto the panegyric, so marked a feature of the georgic, and with his "freer use" of the pastoral disguise is accredited with having given rise to the pastoral allegory. But no matter what the theme, there is always in the setting of the poem an atmosphere of golden days, a remoteness from the practical business of life. Daphnis is dead, but he "delights in restful peace," and his companions are happy in erecting an altar to him. Meliboeus is driven from his fatherland, a mournful exile, but his grief only serves to heighten the effect of the idle joys of the fortunate Tityrus, Tityrus who is allowed to remain piping under the beeches' shade. Shadows fall from the mountains as the sun declines, but of storm clouds and devastating rains one hears almost nothing. The tragedies, as well as the petty ills that mark the constant struggle of life, are left aside. The shepherd sings

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. H. Herford, ed. of the *Shepherds Calendar*, London, Macmillan & Co., 1907, Introd., xxx. Herford does not note the fact that Vergil found both the panegyric and the Pollio motive of pastoral peace in Theocritus. Cp. *Idylls*, xvi and xvii.



untroubled by the swift and cruel passing of time. What sorrows he has are the sweet sorrows of youth; he experiences no foreshadowing of the weight of responsibility and the bitter coming of old age. And so, the pastoral that Vergil left as a model for future generations has come down to us signifying almost always the dream of Arcadian life. Little wonder that a frivolous queen and her short-sighted court should have forgotten a starving peasantry while playing at the pastoral.

True, there are pastorals of the conventional type that dwell more or less upon the petty ills of life; for example, in the eclogue of Severus Sanctus, *De Mortibus Boum*,<sup>8</sup> two herdsmen converse on the subject of a cattle plague; the evils of life seem largely responsible for the bitter tongues of Mantuan's shepherds; Spenser not only satirizes the failings of church and state, but he shows the discomfort of the shepherd's life, drawing a bleak picture of "rancke Winter's rage." Thus the old Thenot rebukes the suffering Cuddie ("Februarie," 9-24):

Lewdly complainest thou, laesie ladde,  
Of Winters wracke for making thee sadde.  
From good to badd, and from badde to worse,  
From worse unto that is worst of all,  
And then returne to his former fall?  
Who will not suffer the stormy time,  
Where will he live tyll the lusty prime?  
Selfe have I worn out thrise threttie yeares,  
Some in much joy, many in many teares,  
Yet never complained of cold nor heate,  
Of Sommers flame, nor of Winters threat,  
Ne ever was to Fortune foeman,  
But gently took that ungently came;  
And ever my flocke was my chief care,  
Winter or Sommer they mought well fare.

Thirsis, in Eclogue 1, of Sabie's *Pan's Pipe*,<sup>9</sup> complains of the death of a ewe, and the loss of a "tidie lamb" that the 'Fox did eate,' while the shepherd slept under a thicket, Ty-

<sup>8</sup> *Anthologia Latina*, ed. A. Riese, Leipzig, 1906, II, 334.

<sup>9</sup> Reprinted by J. W. Bright and W. P. Mustard, *Modern Philology*, VII, 433 ff., April, 1910. For Sabie's debt to Mantuan, see pp. 436 ff.

terus seeks to console him with proverbial wisdom, but Thirsis, paraphrasing Mantuan, bitterly replies:

Good counsell Tyterus, but not so easily followed,  
Man is born in griefe, and griueth at euery mishap.  
I think we shepheards take greatest paines of all others,  
Sustaine greatest losses, we be tryed with daylie labour,  
With colde in winter, with heat in summer oppressed,  
To manie harmes our tender flockes, to manie diseases  
Our sheep are subject, the thiefe praies ouer our heardlings,  
And worse then the thief, the Fox praies ouer our heardlings,  
Thus we poor heardsmen are pinched and plagu'd aboue other.

But Spenser's Thenot finds time to discourse at length to the unhappy Cuddie, and ends by telling his willing listener a long fable; Sabie's Thirsis, who refuses to be comforted by proverbial wisdom, allows himself to be kept awake, and even diverted, by Tyterus' account of an "ancient love." And the great bulk of pastoral literature hardly touches upon the rugged ways of life; it depicts the shepherd of Arcadia, whether Arcadia be England, or Italy, or France.

Repeating the first line of the *Eclogues* with a slight variation, Vergil ends his fourth *Georgic*:

illo Vergilium me tempore dulcis alebat  
Parthenope, studiis florentem ignobilis oti,  
carmina qui lusi pastorum audaxque iuuenta,  
Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi<sup>10</sup>

The traditional date of composition of the *Eclogues* is from 42 to 37 B. C. According to Vergil's own words he was 'bold thru youth when he lightly made these songs of shepherds';<sup>11</sup> it is natural enough that they should be mainly concerned with love and happiness. The *Georgics* were composed later, between the years 37 and 30 B. C., when the poet was no longer bold, but courageous with the experience and wisdom of later years. If the phrase *omnia vincit Amor*<sup>12</sup> is characteristic of the eclogue, the phrase *labor omnia vicit*<sup>13</sup> is even more character-

<sup>10</sup> *Ecl.* I. 1. Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi.

<sup>11</sup> *Georg.* IV, 565.

<sup>12</sup> *Ecl.* X, 69.

<sup>13</sup> *Georg.* I, 145.



istic of the georgic; for the georgic is concerned mostly with work, little with leisure, altho it depicts the farmer's life thru all seasons of the year. It shows glimpses of rural festivities, as in I, 299 ff., II, 385 ff., II, 527 ff., and idyllically peaceful scenes that have the golden age quality of the pastoral, as in the closing passages of the second book. But thruout these scenes, upheld by a noble ideal, the poet writes in a far higher key than in the pastoral. Unlike the shepherd lad, the husbandman bears the responsibility of ownership, the weight of family cares. Tilling his soil, or in moments of enforced leisure, making ready the "arms" with which to conquer the difficulties in his way, he takes earnest thought how he may get the best from that which is his own, and provide for the family that depends upon him. He wastes no time lamenting scorned affection, nor does he spend words vaunting the beauty of his love. He rejoices calmly in the happiness of wedded life,—his sweet children hang on his neck, his 'chaste house keeps its purity.'<sup>14</sup> The greatness of Rome depends upon a virtuous family life, upon 'a youth enduring in labour, accustomed to frugality.'<sup>14a</sup>

But while in the *Georgics* Vergil shows glimpses of a golden age and the gifts that Earth offers of herself, he never lets his reader quite forget the necessity of constant labor. And there is realism enough in the often quoted lines, III, 66-68,

Optima quaque dies miseris mortalibus aevi  
prima fugit; subeunt morbi tristisque senectus  
et labor, et durae rapit inclementia mortis,

and in the account of the evils and dangers that threaten men daily, from the small annoyances of the insatiable goose and the Strymonian crane to the splendid fury of devastating storms. With respect to their treatment of rural life, Vergil's *Bucolics* are fittingly called *Eclogues*, 'selections.' In the *Georgics* the poet attempts to deal broadly with the whole.

With respect to its conventional form, the georgic may be analyzed as follows:

<sup>14</sup> *Georg.* II, 524.

<sup>14a</sup> *Georg.* II, 472.

- Subject matter: A rural occupation.
- Central theme: The glorification of labor; the praise of simple country life in contrast with the troubled luxury of palaces.
- Treatment: Didactic, with precepts varied by digressions arising from the theme, or related to the subject matter.
- Chief features: Formal opening, a statement of the subject: this followed by an invocation to the Muses or other guiding spirits.

Address to the poet's patron.

Panegyrics of great men.

Mythological allusions.

References to foreign lands, their products, climate, customs.

Time marked by the position of the constellations.

Proverbial sayings.

Moralizations and philosophical reflections.

Discussion of the Golden Age.

Discussion of weather signs.

Description of country pastimes.

Descriptions of Nature.

Love of peace; horror of war.

A lament over present day evils, which are contrasted with the virtues and glories of the past.

Rhapsody on the poet's native land.

A long narrative episode,—in Vergil, the story of Aristaëus.

2. *The Pastoral, a literary type of frequent occurrence, made famous by great poets; the Georgic, a literary type coincidentally neglected.*

The "abundance of criticism" spent on the pastoral, and the coincident neglect of the georgic is easily explained; in part, by the frequent occurrence of the former type, the comparative rarity of the latter; in part, by the great beauty of certain pastoral compositions, the tediousness of almost all georgic poetry. A type of poetry of frequent occurrence necessarily excites critical interest. If, at its first appearance, a literary product is justly condemned, criticism, like the unfortunate effort itself, is apt to die soon; but if for any reason worth considering a composition takes a strong hold on the public, tho only temporarily, it is assured a certain importance in literary history; and if a work may be rightly judged a classic, younger critics will constantly arise, inspired to discuss it from different points of view. A type of poetry, difficult in form, infrequent of occurrence, and seldom successful as literature, naturally excites scant comment, and that rarely of a kind to beget new critical effort.

Many poets, among them the greatest and the least, have written pastorals. It requires no especial courage to take up the oaten reed. The poet has little to lose by failure; if he succeed, he knows that the world will listen in spite of itself. But no great poet since Vergil has written a georgic, and comparatively few of the minor poets have attempted the task. Burns, who, as far as practical experience goes, was best fitted to appreciate a georgic, or to attempt to write one, declares upon reading "Dryden's Virgil" that he considers the *Georgics* "by far the best of Virgil," and that "this species of writing" has filled him with "a thousand fancies of emulation."<sup>15</sup> But when he compared his powers with Vergil's, his courage failed. Robert Anderson<sup>16</sup> expresses the opinion that to write a truly

<sup>15</sup> Letter to Mrs. Dunlop, May 4, 1778.

<sup>16</sup> *British Poets*, Vol. xi. Preface to Dodsley's "Agriculture."



excellent georgic is one of the greatest efforts of the human mind. And the frequent attacks upon didactic poetry in general, upon georgic poetry in particular, indeed the occasional defenses of the georgic, emphasize the fact, that, to attempt this form of writing, one must have the courage that leads to an undertaking which promises almost certain defeat.

In the period immediately following Vergil, the pastoral as a *genre* had apparently lost popular favor. Earlier than Calpurnius<sup>17</sup> there appear to have been no imitators of either Theocritus or Vergil whose work survived.<sup>18</sup> Of the writers following Calpurnius, only Nemesianus is named as worthy of any regard. Boccaccio, however, in a summary of the history of pastoral verse, includes both Calpurnius and Nemesianus in his contemptuous utterances concerning pastoral writers. He names 'the Syracusan Theocritus' and 'Vergil, who wrote in Latin,' then adds: "Post hunc autem scripserunt et alii, sed ignobiles, de quibus nil curandum est, excepto inclyto Praeceptore meo Francisco Petrarca".<sup>19</sup>

Of the stream of pastoral poetry during the Middle Ages, Greg observes<sup>20</sup> that "though it nowhere actually disappears, it is reduced to the merest trickle." From the fourth to the tenth century, isolated examples occur that served to preserve the classical memory of the pastoral, reworked, however, with new meanings and new associations under the influence of Christianity.

With the fourteenth century, a new and brilliant epoch begins in the history of the pastoral. In the sixteenth century, Spenser found the *genre* "a literary mode that beyond all others lent itself to the expression of his complex emotions."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Calpurnius' dates are uncertain. He is sometimes supposed to have lived at the end of the third century. For a clear discussion of the subject, cp. C. H. Keene, *The Eclogues of Calpurnius and Nemesianus*, London, 1887.

<sup>18</sup> Cp. Conington on "The Later Bucolic Poets of Rome," *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 114.

<sup>19</sup> *Lettere di G. Boccaccio*, ed. Corrazini, p. 267. See Walter W. Greg, *Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama*, London, 1906, p. 18.

<sup>20</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>21</sup> Herford, *op. cit.* Introd., p. xxvi.



E. K. counts among Spenser's predecessors, Theocritus, Vergil, Mantuan, Boccaccio, Marot, Sannazaro, "and also divers other excellent both Italian and French poets, whose footing this author every where followeth." Spenser was the chief British influence in the popularizing of the conventional pastoral; but the form occurs in British verse as early as the fifteenth century, in Henryson's *Robin and Makene*; and before that the shepherd stories of the Bible had been made familiar to English audiences in the vernacular drama, and in the liturgical plays of the Nativity. From Spenser's time on, the pastoral is found in England, as on the continent, in more or less closely related groups, and in varying types of varying worth.

The georgic, a type of poetry that except in some of its eighteenth-century developments cannot be said ever to have made a truly popular appeal, is in its recurrences comparatively rare. While Vergil was yet living, parts of his *Georgics* appear to have been parodied.<sup>22</sup> Gratius, who was contemporary with Vergil, wrote a treatise on hunting, evidently imitating the model of the *Georgics*. In the first century after Christ, Columella felt it a sacred duty to develop Vergil's sketch of gardens, *Georg.* iv. 116-148. In the second century, Oppian of Cilicia wrote his so-called golden verses on the "Fisherman's Art," the *Halieutica*, and somewhat later another Oppian (of Apamea) wrote a poetic treatise on hunting, five books of which are extant. In the third century, Nemesianus composed a poem on hunting, more like the treatise of Gratius than that of Oppian of Apamea. In the fourth century, Palladius, imitating Columella, wrote in elegiac verse, on the cultivation of trees (Bk. xiv of his *Husbandry*). How much poetry in imitation of the Vergilian didactics may have seen the light from the fourth to the thirteenth century, only to be buried sooner or later in obscurity, I cannot say. I know of nothing in the nature of a georgic during this period, except

<sup>22</sup> Cp. Addison: *Essay on the Georgics*.

the poem that Biese<sup>23</sup> calls "the much-read Hortulus," Walahfrid Strabo's *De Cultura Hortorum*, "an idyll of the cloister garden," written about 820.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, there occur in France a number of treatises in verse on the noble arts of hunting and hawking;<sup>24</sup> and a poetical treatise on fishing, entitled *De Vetula*, is said to have been written by Richard de Fournival at this period.<sup>25</sup> In the fourteenth century, in Italy, Paganino Bonafede wrote some verse precepts on agriculture, entitled *Il Tesoro dei Rustici*;<sup>26</sup> but no one seems to have considered the effort worth publication. In the fifteenth century, very little is found; Halliwell and Wright<sup>27</sup> print a *Fragment of a Poem on Falconry*, written in French at the beginning of the period. Dame Juliana Berner's verse treatise on "Venerie" made part of the famous *Boke of St. Alban's*, which appeared in 1486. To the year 1420, is referred the curious old English poem by Piers of Fulham, entitled "Wayne conseytes of folysche love undyr colour of fyscheng and fowl-yng,"<sup>28</sup> a composition less interesting as an attempt at an allegory than for its information concerning fish and fowl. Sometime in the period following Chaucer, an unknown English writer put the treatise of Palladius on *Husbandry* into Chaucerian stanzas, with original prologues and epilogues, and occasional moralizations of his own; and one original English pro-

<sup>23</sup> A. Biese, *The Development of the Feeling for Nature in the Middle Ages and Modern Times*, translated from the German. London, 1905, p. 61.

<sup>24</sup> Cp. E. Jullien, *La Chasse. Son Histoire et sa Legislation*. Paris. Aubertin, *Hist. de la Langue et de la Litt. Francaises au Moyen Age d'après les Travaux les plus recents*. Paris, 1878, T. II, pp. 64 ff.

<sup>25</sup> See "The Angler's Library," *The Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 158, 1883, p. 160. The writer states that the *De Vetula* was formerly attributed to Ovid. I have been unable to identify R. de Fournival.

<sup>26</sup> Cp. Tiraboschi, *op. cit.*, T. V, II, 864.

<sup>27</sup> T. Wright and J. O. Halliwell, *Reliquae Antiquae*, London, 1841. Vol. I, p. 310.

<sup>28</sup> Reprinted by W. C. Hazlitt, in *Remains of the Early Popular poetry of England*, Vol. II. London, 1866. For the date of the poem, see J. J. Manley, "Literature of Sea and River Fishing," *Internat. Fisheries Exhibition*, 1833, *The Fisheries Exhibition Literature*, Vol. III, p. 563.

duction, georgic tho not Vergilian, belongs to the fifteenth century, a treatise in verse by "Mayster John Gardener" entitled the *Feate of Gardening*.<sup>29</sup> In Italy, Poliziano's *Rusticus* appeared in 1483, a Latin poem still highly praised, which Dunlop<sup>30</sup> describes as "an abridgement of the *Georgics*." Before 1500, Gioviano Pontano imitated certain features of the *Georgics* in his *Urania*, and in his didactic poem *Meteora*; and he produced a true Vergilian georgic in the *De Hortis Hesperidum*.

In the sixteenth century, the pastoral is a favorite type of poetry in Italy and France. With the publication of the *Shepherds Calendar* the genre in England enters upon a golden age. Until the end of the century the pastoral holds its vogue. Critics may scorn the type as they will, but they cannot disregard the instrument that Spenser and Ben Jonson and Shakespeare saw fit to adapt to their needs. The pastoral conventions lend themselves readily to affectations and artificialities, but they are forms in which the poet may express lyric joy and sorrow, romantic emotion, dramatic passion. The georgic, primarily didactic, purporting to treat of practical arts, offered little appeal to an age in which life seemed a great adventure. Representative Elizabethans seem to have found no possibilities in the Vergilian type of didactic poetry. So far as I have been able to discover, Thomas Tusser and Thomas Moffat are the only sixteenth-century Englishmen who regarded georgic precepts as matter fit for verse. In 1557, appeared Tusser's *Hundreth Pointes of Goode Husbandry*, later augmented to *Five Hundred Pointes*, a "profitable, and not unpleasant" georgic, which, however, owes nothing to the Vergilian conventions. Moffat's poem was not printed until 1599. Collier<sup>31</sup> quotes the title page as follows, "The Silkwormes and Their Flies: Lively described in verse by T. M. a Countrie Farmar,

<sup>29</sup> *Archaeologia*, London, 1894.

<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>31</sup> J. P. Collier, *A Bibliographical Account of the Rarest Books in the English Language*. London, 1865, Vol. I, p. 539.



and an apprentice in Physicke. For the great benefit and enriching of England. Printed at London by V. S. for Nicholas Ling, and are to be sold at his shop at the West End of Paules. 1599. 4to., 41 leaves." Collier informs the reader that near the close of the first book, the poet mentions having been in Italy, adding in a marginal note that this was twenty years before he published his poem. Moffat's Italian visit is a simple explanation of this late sixteenth-century English georgic. The art of raising silkworms is among the favorite themes of Italian didactic poets, particularly in the sixteenth century.<sup>32</sup>

In France during this period a few treatises on hunting are found.<sup>33</sup> From Jullien's account they appear to be written more or less according to the model of the georgic. Among them is Claude Gauchet's *Plaisir des Champs*, an interesting poem in which pastoral love songs, descriptions of the chase, and georgic eclogues are mingled at the poet's fancy.

In Italy, during the sixteenth century, so great was the veneration for the classics, that not only was the pastoral a favorite fashion, but the georgic too, for the first time in its history, received notable appreciation as a *genre*. The georgic themes, and the georgic plan are adapted to many subjects treated both in Latin and in Italian verse: didactics on general agriculture, as Luigi Alamanni's *Coltivazione* and Tansillo's *Podere*; on special branches of farming, as Pierio Valeriano's *De Milacis Cultura*, and the poems of Giustolo da Spoleto, Vida, and Tesauro on silkworms; on rural sports, as Valvasone's *Caccia*; on seafaring, as Baldi's *Nautica*. In Tansillo's *Balia* noble ladies are exhorted to nurse their own children, and the same writer's *Vendemmiatore*, characterized by Greg<sup>34</sup> as "one of those obscene debauches of fancy which throw a lurid light on the luxurious imagination of the age," may be considered as a burlesque of a noble georgic theme.

<sup>32</sup> Cp. the following list: Lodovico Lazzarelli, *Il Bombyx*, 1493; P. Giustolo da Spoleto, *De Sere*, 1510; Girolamo Vida, *Bombyces*, 1527; Alessandro Tesauro, *La Sereide*, 1585; Zaccaria Betti, *Il Baco da Seta*, 1756.

<sup>33</sup> See Jullien, *op. cit.*, ch. x and xi.

<sup>34</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 32.

In the seventeenth century, the golden age of pastoral is ended; nevertheless, the *genre* persists, chiefly in the forms of the lyric and of the drama. John Donne and Herrick are found among English writers of pastoral lyrics; Milton reaches the "high water mark of poetry" in *Lycidas*, and immortalizes the pastoral masque in *Comus*. The period furnishes little material for the history of the georgic. I know of nothing of the type in Italy, except Nicolo Partenio Giannettasio's *Ha-lieutica*, a work that I have been unable to see. In 1613, John Dennys' *Secrets of Angling*, a poem based manifestly, if not professedly, on the model of the Vergilian didactics, was published at London.<sup>35</sup> In 1665, René Rapin's *Horti* was published at Paris. Dennys' *Secrets* probably set other English writers scribbling verses on the gentle craft.<sup>36</sup> Rapin's *Horti* may have incited Richard Richardson to write a *Carmen de Cultu Hortorum*, published at London, 1669. It is safe to say that if the seventeenth century begot many other georgics, they have either perished or become lost in obscurity. One must look to the eighteenth century for the culmination of the type.

In the early years of the eighteenth century, a great deal is heard about the pastoral. English critics, influenced by the French views of Fontenelle and Rapin<sup>37</sup> are pleased to discourse upon the true nature of pastoral poetry; English poets continue to write pastorals. The story of the Philips-Pope controversy is not a highly edifying chapter in the history of English literature, but because of it John Gay wrote the *Shepherd's Week*. The pastorals of Pope and Philips are artificial specimens of the *genre*; and it is generally agreed that in the eighteenth century the type is brought to be a thing of scorn.

<sup>35</sup> The date of composition of this poem is uncertain. John Dennys died in 1609.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Thomas Barker, *Barker's Delight: or the Art of Angling*, 1657; S. Ford, *Piscatio, or Angling*, a poem written originally in Latin, 1692, translated by Tipping Sylvester, 1732; *The Innocent Epicure, or The Art of Angling, A Poem* (attributed to Nahum Tate), London, 1697.

<sup>37</sup> Cp. Greg. *Op. cit.*, p. 415.



Yet, even among eighteenth-century pastorals there are found compositions of undeniable charm; in the *Shepherd's Week*, Gay proved himself truly a poet; Shenstone has nowhere so light and delicate a touch as in his *Pastoral Ballad*; and Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd* can still be read with delight.

In 1697, Addison made his complaint about the critics' neglect of Vergil's *Georgics*.<sup>38</sup> Up to that time, unless Moffat's *Silkwormes* be excepted, no true English georgic of the Vergilian type seems to have appeared. John Gardener's verses are rudely made precepts; Tussers's *Husbandry* though less rude is no more Vergilian than John Gardener's effort. John Dennys wrote not of husbandry, but of angling,<sup>39</sup> and Dennys is not concerned with the pursuit of the sport as a means of supplying the larder, but rather with the exercise of gentlemanly virtues and gentlemanly skill. Dennys' seventeenth-century followers probably wrote in much the same vein. John Barker, to be sure, gives recipes in verse for the cooking of fish, but altho his verses are a shade more skilfull than those of John Gardener, his worst enemy could hardly have accused him of having tried to imitate Vergil.

In 1700, there is found an angling poem, entitled *The Gentle Recreation, or the Pleasures of Angling*, a slight work, written rather pleasantly, by John Whitney, "a Lover of the Angle," and, from the testimony of his verses, a lover of Vergil. In 1706, appeared the first English poem of any importance, in which a true georgic theme is treated in the manner and spirit of Vergil's *Georgics*, John Philips' *Cyder*. The influence of this didactic on English poetry of the eighteenth century was considerable. No one has ever suggested that it had any influence on French and Italian poetry: Perry,<sup>40</sup> however, states

<sup>38</sup> Cp. above, p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> It is interesting to note, however, that in the *Epitome of the Art of Husbandry*, by I. B. Gent, London, 1669, there are "brief Experimental Directions for the right use of the Angle." See W. B. Daniel, *Rural Sports*, London, 1812. Supplement, p. 16.

<sup>40</sup> T. S. Perry, *English Literature in the Eighteenth Century*, N. Y., Harper and Brothers, 1883, p. 139.

that *Cyder* was much admired in Italy, and that it was translated into Italian. In 1749, the Abbé Yart translated Philips' georgic into French. Whether or not it had been put into French before then, I am not able to say.

It is hazardous to suggest that Italian interest in georgic poetry needed to be revived thru England's example. Yet the fashion of the georgic seems to have sprung into European favor along with the Anglomania manifested in the passion for English gardens. In Italy, as in France, I know of nothing in the nature of an eighteenth-century Vergilian didactic, previous to the publication of Thomson's *Seasons* in 1744. Philips' georgic may or may not have aroused interest in a type of poetry never before held in much favor by the French, and, apparently, neglected by the Italians for more than a hundred years. There is no doubt, however, of the great influence of Thomson on European poetry in general. It is well known that the *Seasons* were read, translated and imitated by almost all the civilized nations of Europe. Thomson has been called "the father of the landscape garden;" certainly he made nature poetry a literary fashion. Suddenly, thru him, the world-old course of the months and the seasons seemed to reveal to the poets sensations as enchantingly new as the emotions of love. The husbandman's life was to be sung once more as the ideal existence. Saint Lambert<sup>41</sup> writes thus: "La poésie champêtre s'est enrichie dans ce siècle d'un genre qui a été inconnu aux anciennes. . . . Les Anglois et les Allemands ont créé le genre de la poésie descriptive; les anciens aimoient et chantoient la campagne, nous admirons et nous chantons la nature." Further on in his preliminary discourse, the poet speaks of his *Saisons* as georgics made for those who possess the fields, not for those who cultivate them. Other poets, imitating the Vergilian model, as Thomson adapts it to his use in the *Seasons*, give their efforts the sub-title "*géorgiques françaises*."<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. xv.

<sup>42</sup> See, for example, J. Delille, *L'Homme des Champs, ou Les Géorgiques Françaises*, cp. above, p5F. J. de Bernis, *Les Quatre Saisons, ou Les Géorgiques Françaises*, first published, Paris, 1763).



To the influence of both Philips and Thomson the long list of eighteenth-century English imitations of the *Georgics* must be ascribed. Philips and Thomson were wise enough, or fortunate enough, to choose a model that appealed strongly to English poets of their day. Naturally, in a neo-classic age, Vergil was revered as a classic writer. A great poet, he had loved the outdoor world, and he had read into the heart of Nature. More than this, he had prayed the Muses to reveal to him the causes of things, and he had woven into his didactics something of the philosophic and scientific beliefs of the ancients. As a model, he made a strong appeal to the new school of poets, who yearned to sing in praise of country life; and he made an equally strong appeal to the eighteenth-century taste that delighted in attempts to poetize science and philosophy. Much of Vergil's teaching found sympathetic response in the eighteenth-century mind. His plan furnished opportunity for moralizing and philosophizing, and it offered the advantage of the introduction of narrative episodes. Thomson modified Vergil's plan at his pleasure. Other poets who imitated Thomson attempted also to imitate the *Georgics* in all their features. Thruout the century, georgics of various kinds are found. In France, one finds a comparatively long list of eighteenth-century didactics of the Vergilian type. In Italy, not only is the *genre* revived in a long series of new attempts, but sixteenth-century Italian georgics are brought into the light, read and reread as masterpieces of Italian genius. In England and France, as well as in Italy, it becomes the fashion not only to imitate Vergil, but to imitate old and new imitations of Vergil. Early Vergilian didactics appear in reprints and translations.<sup>43</sup> Almost every variety of the georgic occurs, from treatises on general farm life like Vanière's *Praedium Rusticum* and Dodsley's

<sup>43</sup> One finds, for example, in the eighteenth century, French, English and Italian translations of Oppian's *Cynegetica*; English and Italian translations of Oppian's *Halieutica*. From 1716 to 1781, Alamanni's *Coltivazione* was printed twenty times; Tansillo's *Podere* and *La Balia* were printed for the first time in 1769, and *La Balia* was translated into English in 1798 as *The Nurse*, by William Roscommon.

*Agriculture* to burlesques like Gay's *Trivia*, in which the Vergilian conventions are used in a poem treating of the art of walking London streets. The eighteenth-century vogue of the Vergilian type of didactic poetry is among the most interesting phenomena of an age pre-eminently interesting in the history of literary developments.

The pastoral, as has been seen, played a not unimportant part in the literary history of the early eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, it remained for Shelley and Matthew Arnold to stir the world with the supreme beauty of their pastoral laments. True to classic traditions, Tennyson's Oenone wails in bitterness the unfaith of her royal shepherd. *The English Idyls* are reminiscent of the Syracusan poet. Professor Mustard thinks that 'the very title of these poems is meant to suggest their close relationship to the Idyls of Theocritus'.<sup>44</sup> The traditions of the ages are not easily overthrown. Even in the twentieth century, pastorals may still be found, poems of modern life, in a setting of rural beauty and outward peace, eternally old; but these poems fall under the broad definition of the pastoral, the conventional type seems at last to have become a dead fashion.

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the georgic type still persists, examples occurring in French, in English, and in Italian.<sup>45</sup> T. Deyeux's *Chassomanie*, a didactic on the chase, appeared as late as 1844. However, even to scholars, most of these productions are generally unknown, and unless Deyeux's curious poem be excepted, it may be said that after

<sup>44</sup> W. P. Mustard in *The Classical Weekly*, VIII, 166. For a complete discussion of the relation of Tennyson to Theocritus, see W. P. Mustard, *Classical Echoes in Tennyson*, N. Y., The Macmillan Co., 1904, ch. iii.

<sup>45</sup> Among these specimens may be mentioned Delille's *Homme des Champs*, 1800; J. E. Esmenard's *Navigation*, 1804; an anonymous poem on *Fowling*, 1808; James Grahame's *British Georgics*, 1809; Thomas Pike Lathy's bold fraud, *The Anglers*, 1819; Mazzoni, *op. cit.*, p. 78, names a list of Italian didactics, presumably of the Vergilian type, such as C. Arici's *La coltivazione degli ulivi*, 1805; Lorenzo Crico's *La coltivazione del grano-turco*, 1812.



the first quarter of the nineteenth century the *genre* seems to have passed completely out of existence. The fate of the Vergilian didactic appears to be sealed, until in the twentieth century at least two remarkable developments of the type are found in the *Primi Poemetti* of Giovanni Pascoli,<sup>46</sup> and in *Les Géorgiques chrétiennes* of Francis Jammes;<sup>47</sup> Pascoli's *Poemetti*, idylls of country life that Miss Ruth Shepherd<sup>48</sup> calls "a kind of modern Italian georgics, dealing under the same skies and against the same landscapes with the descendants of those who ploughed or kept bees in the Vergilian poems;" Jammes' *Géorgiques chrétiennes*, religious idylls of the French husbandman, poems that Miss Amy Lowell describes as "a whole book dealing with the agricultural labors of a year".<sup>49</sup>

### 3. *Variations in the development of the Georgic compared with variations in the development of the Eclogue.*

The conventional pastoral occurs chiefly in the forms of the eclogue, the lyric, the pastoral romance, and the pastoral drama. The eclogue is, in itself, inherently lyric, and dramatic; and in it is found also the germ of romance. The evolution of the type comes about naturally, since evolution is the nature of living things.

It has been seen that even in the hands of Vergil the pastoral as a literary form shows development, for in *Eclogue* IV Vergil professedly uses the panegyric in a rural song,<sup>50</sup> and continually in his "*carmina pastorum*," he veils an undercurrent of allusion, personal and political. From time to time, later writers continue to adapt the old conventions to new

<sup>46</sup> Bologna, Ditta Nicola Zanichelli, 1907.

<sup>47</sup> Paris, Mercure de France, 1914.

<sup>48</sup> See Miss Shepherd's article, "Giovanni Pascoli," in the *North Am. Rev.*, July, 1916.

<sup>49</sup> Amy Lowell, *Six French Poets*, N. Y., Macmillan Co., 1915.

<sup>50</sup> Sicelides Musae, paulo maiora canamus!  
Non omnes arbusta iuvant humilesque myricae;  
Si canimus silvas, silvae sint consule dignae.



themes. As early as Calpurnius, a poem is found in which georgic subject matter is used in the eclogue form. Mycon, an older shepherd in Calpurnius' fifth *Eclogue* instructs his pupil, Canthus, concerning the management of sheep and goats. *Eclogues* I, IV and part of *Eclogue* VII are in praise of the Emperor. They are written in strains of adulation that suggest Vergil's address to Augustus in the first *Georgic*; but the theme of panegyric, as has been observed, is not new in the eclogue, and belongs equally to the conventions of the pastoral and of the georgic. In *Eclogue* VII, however, a new theme occurs. A shepherd, just returned from the town, recounts his experiences for the benefit of an untravelled friend. He contrasts the life of the town with that of the country, a subject treated frequently, and with many variations, by later writers of the eclogue.

In the middle ages, dating from the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century, the old forms are adapted to Christian themes. The eclogue is used to celebrate the praises of the "saint cross," to prove the truth of the Bible stories, victorious over the falsehood of pagan myths, to voice allegorical religious laments, and to give honor to the saints.<sup>51</sup>

In the fourteenth century, Petrarch discovered the value of the pastoral machinery as a vehicle for veiled satire. Boccaccio uses the traditional pastoral material in the making of the first modern pastoral romance.<sup>52</sup> Mantuan uses it for direct satire, introducing the diatribe against woman, the contrast between town and city dwellers, the denunciation of clerical evils, the contrast between a virtuous past and a corrupt present.<sup>53</sup> Sannazaro, presumably imitating *Idyll* XXI of Theocritus, set a

<sup>51</sup> Cp. Greg, *op. cit.*, p. 19; W. P. Mustard, "On the Pastoral Ancient and Modern," *The Classical Weekly*, March 27, 1915, p. 162.

<sup>52</sup> Sometime between the second and the sixth century, a Greek, called Longus, wrote the pastoral romance of Daphnis and Chloe. Greg thinks that this work played no part in the evolution of the earliest modern shepherd romances.

<sup>53</sup> This and the contrast between town and city dwellers are also favorite georgic themes.

new fashion in the piscatory eclogue, in which he makes the speakers fishermen, instead of shepherds, the setting "piscatory," instead of pastoral.

In the *Comedia nuova pastorale* of Giambattista Casalio of Faenza, a composition placed somewhat before 1538, Greg<sup>54</sup> recognizes "what may almost be regarded as the first conscious attempt to write a pastoral play." There seems, however, to be no adequate treatment of the evolution of the pastoral drama. Greg's view is that "the theatrical tendency first exhibited itself in the mere recitation of a dialogue in character," the earliest example of these so-called *ecloghe rappresentative* being identical in form with those written merely for literary circulation.<sup>55</sup> As early as the tenth century, European audiences had become familiar with the shepherd figures of the religious dramas, and later with the shepherds of the medieval miracle plays.<sup>56</sup> However, it cannot be said that these pastoral traditions had any more influence on the evolution of the modern pastoral drama than the romance of *Daphnis and Chloe* is said to have had on the modern pastoral romance. Nevertheless, in the case of English literature one can grant that "the shepherd's plays of the religious cycles, the popular ballads, and a few of the Scots poets of the time of Henryson, all alike furnish verse which may be regarded as the index of the readiness of the popular mind to receive the introduction of a formal pastoral tradition."<sup>57</sup>

The most striking minor variations in the pastoral are due, presumably, to Sannazaro and the vogue of his piscatory eclogues. "Nautical" or "naval eclogues" are attempted in

<sup>54</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 172.

<sup>55</sup> See Greg, "On the Origin and Development of the Italian Pastoral Drama," *op. cit.*, App. I, p. 429.

<sup>56</sup> In the Towneley *Secunda Pastorum*, the shepherds appear, complaining like Spenser's Cuddie, of the biting cold. They also enumerate in georgic fashion a list of the evils of their time. In the Chester *Shepherd's Play*, a remarkable passage is introduced, in which, in the manner of the georgic, the shepherds discuss the diseases of sheep, and their cures.

<sup>57</sup> See Greg, *op. cit.* p. 417.



which sailors speak,<sup>58</sup> "venatory eclogues," songs of huntsmen, "vinitory eclogues," songs of vine dressers; "sea eclogues," songs of Tritons and mermen; and "mixed eclogues," in which the speakers are a fisherman and a shepherd, or a woodman, fisher, and a swain."<sup>59</sup>

In the eighteenth century, the pastoral formulas are burlesqued in a series of town eclogues,<sup>60</sup> and further variations of the type are found in Gay's *Quaker Eclogue*, in Mrs. Barbauld's *School Eclogue*, and in Shenstone's *Colemira, A Culinary Eclogue*.

The georgic, like the pastoral, is found in many variations. Vergil sings of tillage, of the culture of trees, of cattle, and of the "divine gift of aerial honey." The poet may take his choice of subject from any special branch of husbandry, and write a poem that answers to the definition of a georgic in the narrowest meaning of the word. Vergil, (*Georg.* III, 404-413), tells the farmer not to neglect the care of dogs, useful for protection against thieves, and valuable in the chase. He remarks (*Georg.* IV, 116-148), that he would like to write at greater length of gardens; he infers (*Georg.* I, 456-457), that in the face of certain signs it will be useless to advise him to cross the deep; Hesiod before him, in *The Works and Days*, had given advice concerning sea-faring. Vergil's suggestions seem to have offered the fatal fascination of themes "as yet unsung,"—hence the long list of forgotten or neglected poems that follow more or less closely the didactic type perfected in the *Georgics*.

The first important variation of the type is found in Gratius' adaptation of certain georgic features to the subject of the chase, the huntsman instead of the farmer being advised con-

<sup>58</sup> Cp. Kerlin, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

<sup>59</sup> For the venatory variation cp. *Petri Lotichii Secundi Solitariensis, Poemata quae exstant omnia*, Dresdae, MDCCLXXXIII. Ecl. I and II. For examples of the other variations, cp. *The Piscatory Eclogues of Jacopo Sannazaro*, Ed. W. P. Mustard, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1914. Introd. pp. 21, 33, 42, 43, 48.

<sup>60</sup> See Kerlin, *op. cit.*, pp. 59 ff.



cerning the implements and methods of his art. Corresponding to the venatory eclogue there occurs the "cyngetic," which may be styled a venatory georgic. Annibale Cruceio's *Alcon*,<sup>61</sup> usually attributed to Fracastoro, is an imitation of Calpurnius' *Mycon* that illustrates the crossing of the types of the venatory georgic and the venatory eclogue. *Alcon*, an old huntsman, instructs a younger companion concerning the care of hunting dogs. The work is of especial interest in that it shows how closely the pastoral may be related to the georgic in a variation of both types.

From the pursuit of creatures on the land to the pursuit of creatures on the deep, there is but a step. Vergil, (*Georg.* I, 139-142), declares that at the end of the Golden Age men had begun to hunt and fish:

tum laqueis captare feras et fallere visco  
inventum, et magnos canibus circumdare saltus;  
atque alius latum funda iam verberat amnem  
alta petens, pelagoque alius trahit umida lina.

Oppian of Cilicia was probably familiar with the lines. At any rate, he wrote the *Halieutica*, a poem on deep-sea fishing that shows familiarity with Vergilian conventions. Later poets treat similar themes, showing more or less indebtedness to Vergil, rather than to Oppian. Corresponding to the piscatory variation of the pastoral there occurs the piscatory variation of the georgic. Hazlitt<sup>62</sup> calls *The Compleat Angler* "the best pastoral in our language," but *The Compleat Angler* may be said to be georgic as well as pastoral. John Whitney's *Dialogue between Piscator and Corydon* is an eclogue of mixed character, in which a fisherman and a shepherd discuss their respective pleasures and profits, are entertained by pastoral songs celebrating country joys and virtues, and encourage each other with georgic reflections and moralizations.

<sup>61</sup> N. E. Lemaire, *Poetae Latini Minores*, Vol. I, p. 171. For a comment on the authorship of the poem see E. Carrara, "La Poesia Pastorale," *Storia dei generi Letterari Italiani*, Milan, p. 408.

<sup>62</sup> *Op. cit.* See above, p. 19.

In the sixteenth century, Bernardino Baldi, inspired by the characteristic georgic desire to tread untrodden ways, wrote *La Nautica*, in which he uses the georgic conventions and the Vergilian plan in a versified treatise on sea-faring,<sup>63</sup> and thus produced a nautical georgic corresponding to the nautical or naval eclogue. Thomas Kirchmayer, like the medieval writers of eclogues, adapted georgic themes to Christian teachings. In his *Agricoltura Sacra*, man, the spiritual husbandman, is instructed in the care of the estate of his soul.<sup>64</sup> Fracastoro, who has frequently been compared to Vergil, used Vergil's framework in a poem entitled *Syphilis, sive de Morbo Gallico*. Tansillo, interested also in physical welfare, undertook to sermonize in verse on the method of rearing high-born infants.<sup>65</sup>

In the seventeenth century, Rapin, in his *Horti*, (Bk. I, 11) suggests that some one write a medicinal georgic. Conington<sup>66</sup> observes that before the time of Nemesianus, Serenus Sammonicus had written 1115 hexameters entitled *De Medicina Praecepta*, but adds that this work "is not properly a didactic poem, but merely a medical treatise in metre." In the sixteenth century, Paola del Rosso wrote a didactic entitled *La Fisica*; but Ginguené describes it as an abridgement of Aristotle's book on physics, severely written, without digressions or ornaments. No one seems to have fully carried out Rapin's suggestion. Collier<sup>67</sup> describes briefly a work written entirely in verse by Edmund Gayton, *The Art of Longevity or a Dieteticall Institution*. The work is in thirty-three chapters, treating of the wholesomeness or unwholesomeness of every kind of food; as it was "printed by the Author," in 1659, four years after the appearance of Rapin's *Horti*, it may be that Gayton was en-

<sup>63</sup> B. Baldi, *La Nautica con Introduzione e note di Gaetano Bonifacio*, Citta di Castello, 1915.

<sup>64</sup> Cp. C. H. Herford, *Studies in the Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1886, pp. 121 ff.

<sup>65</sup> L. Tansillo, "La Balia," *L'Egloga e i Poemetti, con introduzione e note di Francesco Flamini*, Napoli, 1893.

<sup>66</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 400.

<sup>67</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 309-310.



couraged in his task by the suggestion of the French writer. In the eighteenth century, from the point of view of a physician and of a poet, John Armstrong wrote a treatise in blank verse on *The Art of Preserving Health*, a variation of the georgic that might have satisfied Rapin, had the English poet discoursed more on the use of medicines.

Akenside, whose interest centered primarily in the workings of the mind, used the model furnished by Horace in the *Epistles* and by Vergil in the *Georgics*, to write a didactic entitled *The Pleasures of the Imagination*. In his preface, Akenside states that he has followed Horace and Vergil as models; in his poem, he illustrates the use of many of the favorite georgic conventions. In the third book of the first edition of his poems, he imitates allegorically Vergil's instructions on soils. Writing of the wonder of God's gifts to man, Akenside discourses on Taste, telling how the early seeds of love and admiration are sown by the Creator in the minds of man, and how constant culture is necessary to rear these seeds to bloom; and as Vergil sang of differences in the character of soils, so Akenside sings of differences in the character of the human mind.

Gay's *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London*, published 1716, and Soame Jenyns' *Art of Dancing*, published 1727, are interesting examples of the burlesque variation of the georgic. Both poems are mock heroics in which georgic conventions are adapted to situations in city life. The eighteenth century produced the town georgic as it produced the town eclogue. Writers of the latter are said to have had a model in Theocritus, *Idyll xv*.<sup>68</sup> The very name "town georgic" is in itself striking proof of the extent to which the Vergilian type of didactic poetry may wander from the scene of field-work.

Falconer's *Shipwreck*, published 1762, is another example of the varying use of the georgic conventions, the poem being an epic with georgic features, such as technical instructions of a nautical character, moralizations, geographical excursions, ref-

<sup>68</sup> Cp. Kerlin, *op. cit.*, p. 59.



erences to famous men, the contrast of rural innocence with city arts.

But by far the most important eighteenth century development of the type is that originated by James Thomson in the *Seasons*. Thomson omits the most difficult feature of the *Georgics*, the versifying of practical precepts, but he makes use of the georgic motives and of almost all the georgic conventions. Vergil proposes to teach the husbandman agricultural arts. He describes the occupations of the farmer thru the year, referring incidentally to the seasons as they are related to the farmer's occupations. Thomson proposes to give an account of the course of the seasons, referring incidentally to the farmer's occupations as they relate to the seasons. Vergil introduces descriptions of nature, chiefly as background for the husbandman at work. Thomson introduces the farmer and his work chiefly to give life to his descriptions of nature. Instead of using the formal Vergilian statement of the subject, Thomson begins each of his poems with an apostrophe to the Season he is about to describe; his mythological references are rare, and he can hardly be said to introduce pointed proverbial sayings. But if he refrains from the use of proverbial sayings, he makes up by the length of his moralizations and of his philosophical reflections. He never attempts to convey practical advice directly, altho in *Spring* (137 ff.), after his description of the manner of destroying orchard pests, he uses Vergil's personal tone in exhorting the swains to patience. All the other features familiar in the georgics he uses as freely as he uses Vergil's phrasing. In *Spring*, (142 ff.) and in *Autumn* (43 ff.) he introduces the central motive of the *Georgics*, the glorification of labor, but he does not use the motive as a central thought. Thruout the *Seasons* he sings the praise of simple country life; in *Autumn*, almost in Vergil's own words, he paints the existence of the husbandman, happy beyond the dreams of the great.

Vergil suggests; Thomson delights to expand. Vergil touches upon various philosophical beliefs; Thomson expounds eighteenth century philosophical ideas line upon line. In Vergil,

every word seems necessary to the perfection of the whole; Samuel Johnson is said to have pleased an unsuspecting audience by reading a passage from Thomson in which he omitted every other line. Nevertheless, partly because of what he owes to Vergil, partly because much that he has to say is refreshing to jaded eighteenth century readers, chiefly because in spite of his faults he is a true poet, Thomson offered a variation of the georgic that found a welcome not only among the learned, but also among readers who had never construed a Latin line. The influence of Thomson is seen in English poems planned to imitate closely the Vergilian model; but alongside of these didactics there are found in English, French, and Italian, imitations of the Vergilian model as Thomson adapted it to his use.<sup>69</sup>

Pascoli, in the *Primi Poemetti*, like Thomson in the *Seasons*, makes no pretence of giving his reader direct practical advice. But unlike Thomson, Pascoli introduces no learned allusions, no panegyrics, no geographical excursions, no narrative episodes, no sorrowful contrast between the past and the present. It is the Vergilian spirit, rather than the Vergilian motives, that one finds in Pascoli. Reading the *Poemetti*, one thinks inevitably of Millet; only, too often, Millet fills one with a sense of sadness. The atmosphere of the *Poemetti*, unlike that in so much of Pascoli, is of deep unreasoning content. The *Poemetti* are a series of little pictures, idylls in which are depicted the homely realities of the Italian *contadini's* daily life. To his listening help-mate the husbandman repeats proverbial wisdom,

Sai che, per il grano,  
presto è talora, tardi è sempre male.  
. . . chi con l'acqua semina, raccoglie  
poi col paniere; e cuoce fare in vano  
più che non fare.

---

<sup>69</sup> Among the most interesting of the English poems influenced by the Thomsonian variation of the georgic type are Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, Cowper's *Task*, and William Bloomfield's *The Farmer's Boy*. Delille's *Homme des Champs* shows the influence of Goldsmith even more markedly than that of Thomson. N. G. Léonard's *Le Village Detruit*, is a weak copy of the *Deserted Village*. Mazzoni, *op. cit.*, p. 79, mentions a nineteenth



"Some mute star" looks down upon him as he plows; and the young daughters of the house rising at dawn, perform accustomed tasks. Brown-haired Viola milks the cow; golden-haired Rosa, like Vergil's housewife, sings to the sound of the weaving comb and at the command of the "cara pia madre" helps to prepare the simple meal. And when the Angelus rings, mother and daughters carry bread and wine to the fields where the sowers stand, like Millet's peasants, repeating the familiar prayer.

With the loving minuteness of Vergil, Pascoli describes the *contadini's* daily tasks. Like Vergil he charms the homeliest details into verse, and more perhaps than any other poet since Vergil, he writes with intimate understanding of the husbandman's life. With exquisite simplicity, more perhaps even than Vergil, he reveals the poetry of the peasants' religion, the nobility of simple tasks wrought with contentment, hallowed by the sacred beauty of family love.

In Francis Jammes' *Géorgiques chrétiennes*, there is still another development of the georgic type in which practical precepts are omitted. However, a number of the conventional Vergilian features are illustrated, such for example, as the references to foreign lands, their products and customs; descriptions of rural festivities and of rural sports; the marking of the seasons by the constellations; references to famous men; a lament over the desertion of the soil; and the use of narrative episodes. *Les Géorgiques chrétiennes* treat of agricultural labors, such as harvesting, and sowing, the culture of the vine; but the poet does not offer direct instructions as to the methods of farming. Like Pascoli's *Poemetti*, these georgics are idylls of the farmer's life; like the *Poemetti*, they present a series of scenes in the life of one family.<sup>70</sup> Jammes makes an occasional mythological reference, but like Pascoli, he introduces no pagan religion. In the *Poemetti*, one hears the sound of the church bell, the sing-

century *Stagioni* by Giuseppe Barbieri, and comments upon the European vogue of the Thomsonian nature poetry.

<sup>70</sup> In this respect, both series of poems are like Bloomfield's *Farmer's Boy*.



ing of religious songs, the prayer of the Angelus; in the pages of Jammes, "harvesting angels" guard the land no longer protected by the deities of ancient Rome. The French poet invokes his angel (chant III, 48 ff.), not the Muse; he dedicates his third song to the "Mère de Dieu"; and he describes church feasts such as Christmas, Rogation Days, and All Souls'. He sighs over the desertion of the soil, as Vergil and so many other poets have sighed, but the present-day evils that he most deeply laments are those brought about by the irreligion of France.

In spite of certain general resemblances to Pascoli's *Poemeti*, *Les Géorgiques chrétiennes* are very different from the Italian poems. In plan they are much nearer to the Vergilian type; in spirit far less near to Vergil. As a development of the georgic type they are of especial interest; as poems, they offer much that is worth while, but they fail to grip the heart with the deep and abiding beauty of the *Poemeti* of Pascoli.

#### 4. *Variations of the Georgic classified.*

A didactic poem of the Vergilian type may illustrate only the use of the plan and general treatment of the *Georgics*, or it may illustrate only the spirit and the motives of the *Georgics*, and in plan be quite different from Vergil's didactics. A poem may be a georgic, Vergilian only with respect to subject matter; it may be Vergilian in form and in subject have nothing in common with the true georgic. The Vergilian conventions may be used to convey instructions about any practical art, they may be used to impart precepts about a science or a fine art; they may be adapted to Christian themes and allegorical teachings; they may be used for satire and burlesque, or in the telling of a tale. Georgic themes may be the subjects discoursed upon by the speakers in an eclogue; thus the types cross. And finally, a poem that is georgic in motive or subject matter comes under the broad definition of the term pastoral.

The chief variations in the development of the georgic type fall into two general classes, which may be sub-divided as follows:

I. *Poems marked primarily by the use of rules of practice.*

a. The georgic in the narrowest sense of the word, a composition in which the poet treats of rules of practice concerning the science of general husbandry, or of any special branch of husbandry such as gardening, bee-keeping or the culture of silkworms.

1. The non-Vergilian georgic, written like Hesiod's *Works and Days*, with no regard for definite plan or artistic structure; for example, Thomas Tusser's *Five Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie*, John Gardener's *Feate of Gardening*.

2. The Vergilian georgic, in which the poet follows a definite plan and makes more or less use of conventions peculiar to the Vergilian type; for example, Alammani's *Coltivazione* (of general husbandry), Rapin's *Hortorum libri IV*, Christopher Smart's *Hop Garden*, Ruccelai's *Api*, Vida's *Bombyces*.

b. The cynegetic, the halieutic, or the ixeutic<sup>71</sup> (nearest in type to the true georgic), a composition in which the poet treats of rules of practice not concerning field-work but field-sports, such as hunting with hounds (the cynegetic), deep sea-fishing or angling (the halieutic), and of hawking or the snaring of birds (the ixeutic). These efforts may be non-Vergilian in form (Dame Juliana Berner's *Treatise on Venerie*), or they may be written in imitation of the *Georgics* (William Somerville's *Chase*). The Oppian poems are among the most interesting examples of the cynegetic and the halieutic; Claude Gauchet's "Le Moyen de Prendre les Alouettes au miroir"<sup>72</sup> illustrates a sixteenth-century variation of the ixeutic.<sup>72</sup>

c. A composition in which the poet treats of rules of practice concerning any outdoor occupation, as in the nautical georgic, a poem on the art of sea-faring; for example, Bernardino Baldi's *Nautica*, Joseph Esmenard's *Navigation*.

<sup>71</sup> The poems of this class will be treated in detail in a subsequent chapter.

<sup>72</sup> See *Le Plaisir des Champs*, Paris. Edition of 1604.



d. A composition in which the poet gives direct advice concerning any practical art. The effort may be a non-Vergilian bit of rhyme, perhaps on some prosaic matter of the housewife's province, such as John Gay's *Receipt for Stewing Veal. With notes by the author*; <sup>73</sup> or it may be a Vergilian didactic following the georgic conventions, and emphasizing the necessity of honest toil and the advantages of country life; for example, John Armstrong's *Art of Preserving Health*.

e. A composition in which the poet follows the georgic conventions, purporting to give advice concerning any art or occupation; for example, Soame Jenyns' *Art of Dancing*, Gay's mock-heroic *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London*.

f. An eclogue in which the characters are concerned with rules of practice; as in Calpurnius' *Mycon*, John Scott's *Amoebæan Eclogue*, "*Rural Business; or the Agriculturists*." <sup>74</sup>

II. *Poems illustrating georgic themes or georgic features, but not marked primarily by the use of rules of practice.*

a. A composition that treats of rural life, following in part georgic ideas and georgic conventions, altho not dealing primarily with an occupation; as, for example, Thomson's *Seasons*.

b. A composition in which practical precepts are not used, altho the poet treats in the Vergilian spirit of farm occupations and uses to some extent georgic features; as in Bloomfield's *Farmer's Boy*, Pascoli's *Primi Poemetti*, and Jammes' *Géorgiques chrétiennes*.

c. A composition in which, for allegorical or philosophical purposes, the Vergilian plan is imitated, wholly or in part, altho the poet does not treat of a practical occupation and is not concerned primarily with country life; as in Thomas Kirch-

<sup>73</sup> See Chalmer's *English Poets*, x, 495.

<sup>74</sup> See Chalmer's *English Potes*, xvii, 469.



meyer's *Agricultura Sacra*, and Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination*.

d. An eclogue in which the characters discourse on georgic themes; for example, John Whitney's *Dialogue between Piscator and Corydon*, Claude Gauchet's "Michaut-Phlippet."<sup>75</sup>

e. A narrative poem with digressions of georgic character; as in Falconer's *Shipwreck*.

---

<sup>75</sup> See *Le Plaisir des Champs*, Paris, 1869, p. 86.

## CHAPTER IV

DIDACTIC POEMS ON GENERAL AGRICULTURE <sup>1</sup>1. *Early Italian Poems on Agriculture*

Didactic poems on general agriculture may be considered in several groups: the earliest Italian works on the subject, early English non-Vergilian georgics, sixteenth-century Italian poems, and works in French and English written in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Except, perhaps, in the first years of the eighteenth century, the didactic type of Vergilian poetry seems to have appealed more strongly to the Italians than to any other people. With them begins fitly enough the revival of the georgic on general agriculture. In 1483 Poliziano's *Rusticus* was written as an introduction to the study of Vergil's *Georgics*. Dunlop<sup>2</sup> rightly characterizes the *Rusticus* as an "abridgment of the subject matter of the *Georgics*." Yet the poem is far more than this, for altho Poliziano does not follow Vergil's plan, and does not treat of rules of practice in the fashion of either Vergil or of Hesiod, the *Rusticus* is one of the finest of the Vergilian imitations; a poem that convinces the reader that the theme of farm life can be an inspiration to poets of all ages, since in the late fifteenth century it can be treated in verses of almost as great loveliness as those of the Mantuan himself.

<sup>1</sup> The compositions which are purely georgic, either in subject matter alone, or both in subject matter and in plan, fall naturally into several different groups which may be classed as follows: (a) didactics on general farming, (b) didactics on gardens, (c) didactics on silkworms, (d) didactics on sheepraising, (e) didactics on miscellaneous agricultural subjects. I shall attempt to treat in detail only the poems of the first two groups.

For the chief poems on silkworms see above, p. 31. J. Dyer's *The Fleece* (on sheep-raising), one of the finest of English georgics, has been celebrated in Wordsworth's sonnet *To The Poet John Dyer*. J. Grainger's *The Sugar Cane*, C. Smart's *The Hop Garden*, J.-B. Spolverini's *Colt. del Riso*, G. Roberti's *Le Fragole* are interesting examples of subjects, georgic in the narrowest sense of the word.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 30.

Poliziano's Latin poem was due directly to the inspiration of Vergil. But long before Poliziano, another Italian writer, the source of whose inspiration I do not know, attempted to make verses on agriculture. This was the Bolognese Paganino Bonafede<sup>3</sup> who in the *Tesoro dei Rustici* began "that kind of Georgic poetry which was fully developed later by Alamanni in his *Coltivazione*, by Giralomo Barrufaldi in the *Canapajo* etc."<sup>4</sup> This was as early as 1360, according to Tiraboschi<sup>5</sup> who adds that Il Quadrio speaks of a manuscript copy that the canon Amadei had of the *Tesoro*. Tiraboschi disposes of the subject by remarking of Bonafede that "il saggio che egli ne dà è sì poco felice che a niuno, io credo, caderà mai in pensiero di pubblicarlo." In how far the ill-fated effort is Vergilian I am at present unable to determine. Bonafede's work, apparently, had no influence on other Italian writers. Poliziano, however, may be regarded as a powerful force in awakening directly or indirectly the enthusiasm for Vergil's *Georgics* that resulted in the remarkable series of didactic poems written in Italy thruout the sixteenth century.

## 2. Early English non-Vergilian Georgics

The first English poem on the subject of farming is not original. It is the Middle English version of Palladius on Husbandrie,<sup>6</sup> most of which is said to be a fairly close transla-

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> See Hermann Oelsner, "On Ital. Lit.," *E. B.*, vol. xiv.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.* See above, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> This translation was first printed for the E.E.T.S. No. 52, ed. from the Unique ms. of about 1420 A. D. In Colchester Castle. By the Rev. Barton Lodge, M. A., with a rhyme index ed. by Sidney J. Herrtage, B. A. London, 1873 and 1879. I have been unable to see the later edition by Mark Liddell, *The Middle English Translation of Palladius de re rustica*, ed. with critical and explanatory notes. Pt. I—Text. Berlin, E. Ebering, 1896. See the review in *Anglia Beibl.*, vii, 97. Gustav Körting, *Grundr. der Gesch. der Eng. Lit.*, p. 153, n. 1, cites the title of a promising Göttingen dissertation, Streuver, *Die mittelleng. Übersetzung des P., ihr Verhältnis zur Quelle und ihre Sprache*.



tion of the Latin author.<sup>7</sup> The version of the *Early English Text Society*, edited from the Colchester manuscript, is not complete. Mark Liddell edited the translation from the manuscript of Earl Fitzwilliam, which was unknown to Lodge and Herrtage, and which is believed to have been copied from the original. Several gaps in the Colchester manuscript are here filled in, and to the first book there is a prologue of one hundred and twenty-eight verses, in which the translation is said to have been made at the command and under the supervision of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester. How much more of the history of the Middle English translator may be had from the Fitzwilliam manuscript I do not know. His name seems not to have been mentioned anywhere; Herrtage states that it is conjectured that he was a member of one of the religious houses of Colchester, or in the vicinity, a conjecture founded on the facts that gardening was a favorite pursuit of these houses, and that Palladius was held in repute among them. In the Colchester manuscript the personal interpolations of the translator throw no light on his identity, but they show that he was a devoutly religious man who dedicated his work to the Christian God. The correctness of his translation, says Herrtage, is a proof of his learning, and the general character of his verse bespeaks "literary taste as well as leisure." The verse is written in rime royal, indicating the writer's knowledge and admiration of Chaucer.

The poem in the Colchester ms. is in twelve books. The first, an introduction of one hundred and sixty-eight stanzas, gives

<sup>7</sup> Lodge remarks that little is known of Palladius. He lived in the fourth century A. D., in the time of Theodosius. His works obtained some celebrity and were translated into the vernacular of almost every country of Europe. "Palladius' work . . . was the foundation of nearly all English writings on husbandry for several centuries, and most of them, that of Grosseteste included, were merely translations or adaptations of that work" (The Hon. Mrs. Evelyn Cecil, *A Hist. of Eng. Gardening*. London, 1910, p. 59). The first acknowledged English translation of Palladius seems to be the poem of the unknown author of the Colchester ms. The name and work of Nicholas Bollard, a monk of Westminster, another translator of the same period, have been preserved, but this version includes only the parts relating to grafting, planting, and sowing. See Mrs. Cecil, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

a variety of general precepts on tillage, pasturage, the best methods of building, the care of domestic fowls, the necessity of good air and water, even the best articles of dress for rustics. The other eleven books give advice for each month of the year, except December, treating of almost every known farm occupation, from plowing to preserving; and detailing, often with pleasant laughter, curious superstitions relative to agriculture. Palladius evidently had no care for an artistic plan, and he scorns the aid of rhetoric. The opening stanza reads:

Consideraunce is taken atte prudence  
 What mon me moost enforme: and husbondrie  
 No rethorick doo teche or eloquence;  
 As sum have doon hemself to magnifie.  
 What com thereof? That wyse men folie  
 Her wordes helde. Yit other thus to blame  
 We styntte, in cas men doo by us the same.

Gesner, comments Mr. Lodge,<sup>8</sup> on line 4, considers this to be a taunt aimed at Columella, altho Columella gives no more occasion for it than Palladius himself; and the latter by his remark in the last lines, seems to be conscious that he is open to this retort. It appears more reasonable to infer that Palladius had reference to Vergil; and the neglect of Vergil's sound precepts, already referred to, seems to some extent to justify the question,

What com thereof? That wyse men folie  
 Her wordes held.

The second stanza, a statement of the general subjects to be treated, recalls the stock opening of the Vergilian didactic, but except an occasional moralization, there is nothing further to suggest the conventions of the georgic. The Middle English translator's style has the simplicity of his age, and his precepts are far pleasanter to read than many eighteenth-century episodes. It would seem that his Muse did not resent the fact that she was scorned. Read continuously, the book is a labor; read by bits, it is, occasionally, delightful. Stanzas like the following, the epilogue to Bk. vi and prologue to Bk. vii, make the

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 221.



reader regret that the translator reveals so little of his own personality:

So May is ronne away in litel space,  
The tonge is shorte, and longe is his sentence,  
Forth ride I see my Gide, and him I trace  
As he as swyfte to be yit I dispence.  
O sone of God alloone, O sapience,  
O hope, of synnes drop or gile immuyn,  
Loving I to The syng as my science  
• Can doo; and forth I goo to werk atte Juyn.

The Middle English *Palladius* plays no important part in the history of the georgic, for the world knew nothing of the "unique manuscript" until its discovery at Colchester Castle, when it was published, not for its value as a georgic, but as a piece of literature illustrating the transitional state of the language shortly after the time of Chaucer.

Thomas Tusser's *A Hundredth Pointes of Good Husbandrie*, afterwards expanded to *Five Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie*,<sup>9</sup> is the first original English georgic on general agriculture of which I have any knowledge. Excepting John Gardener's verses<sup>10</sup> it is, as far as I know, the earliest English georgic. Tusser professes to imitate no one; yet, with reason, his poem has been compared to the *Works and Days*. Conington,<sup>11</sup> writing of eighteenth-century didactics, says: "Whatever may be their beauties, the Hesiodic spirit is absent from one and all alike. If we are resolved to trace it to its lurking-places in English poetry we must ascend to times more nearly resembling Hesiod's own, when old Tusser could write not for critics, but for farmers, and the *Five Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie* were received as respectable poetry because they were known to be good sense."

Tusser's title-page is, like that of Chapman's *Hesiod*, a fair summary of the poem's contents: "Five Hundred Pointes of good Husbandrie, as well for the Champion, or open countrie

<sup>9</sup> *Eng. Dialect Society Publ. No. 21*, 1878, ed. by W. Payne and Sidney J. Herrtage.

<sup>10</sup> See above, p. 30.

<sup>11</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 134.



as also for the woodland, or several, mixed in every Month with Huswiferie, over and besides the booke of Huswiferie corrected, better ordered, and newly augmented to a fourth part more, with divers other lessons, as a diet for the former, of the properties of winds, planets, hops, herbes, bees, and approved remedies of sheepe and cattle, with many other matters both profitable, and not unpleasant for the Reader. Also a table of husbandrie at the beginning of this booke: and another of huswiferie at the end; for the better and easier finding of any matter contained in the same.

"Newly set forth by Thomas Tusser, Gentleman, Servant of the Honorable Lord Paget of Beaudesert. Imprinted at London, by Henrie Denham, dwelling in Paternoster Row, at the Signe of the Starre, 1580."

These varied matters, "profitable and not unpleasant," are set forth mainly in anapestic meter,<sup>12</sup> rough but well adapted for retention in the memory. Like the English *Palladius*, Tusser follows no definite artistic plan. The work is divided into one hundred and fourteen sections, or poems; each is complete in itself, and some have no relation to the subject of husbandry.

Warton<sup>13</sup> writes of the *Five Hundred Pointes*, "It must be acknowledged that this old English georgic has much more of the simplicity of Hesiod, than of the elegance of Virgil: and a modern reader would suspect, that many of its salutary maxims originally decorated the margins, and illustrated the calendars of an antient almanac. It is without invocations, digressions and descriptions: no pleasing pictures of rural imagery are drawn from meadows covered with flocks and fields waving with corn, nor are Pan and Ceres once named. Yet it is valuable as a genuine picture of the agriculture, the rural arts, and the domestic economy and customs, of our industrious

<sup>12</sup> For a brief but interesting discussion of Tusser's Versification, cp. E. D. So, 21, xx, xxi. See also Schipper, *Grundr. der Engl. Metrik*, Leipzig, 1895, pp. 108, 249.

<sup>13</sup> *The Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, London, 1824, vol. iv, p. 129.

ancestors." Warton is right about the absence of invocations and descriptions; but the poem illustrates the Vergilian convention of an address to the writer's patron, in "the Author's Epistle to the Late Lord William Paget" and in the eulogistic lines to "the Right Honorable and my Speciall good Lord and Master, the Lord Thomas Paget of Beaudesert, son and heire to his late father deceased." It is not true that Ceres is not once named, for Tusser shows his acquaintance with mythology in the lines to Lord Thomas Paget,

But God hath wrought his pleasure,  
and blest him out of measure,  
with heaven and earthlie treasure,  
so good a God is he.

His counsell had I used,  
and *Ceres* art refused  
I need not thus have mused  
nor drooped as I now do.

And again,

Though *Pallas* hath denide me,  
hir learned men to guide me,  
for that she dailie spide me,  
with countrie how I stood:

Yet *Ceres* so did bold me,  
with hir good lessons told me,  
that rudeness cannot hold me,  
from doing country good.

The theme of contrast between city and country is treated without illusion:

For citie seems a wringer,  
the penie for to finger,  
from such as there do linger,  
or for their pleasure lie:  
Though countrie be more painfull,  
and not so greedie gainfull,  
yet it is not so vainfull,  
in following fansies eie.<sup>14</sup>

The pastime feature of the georgic is illustrated very happily, particularly in the verses on Christmas festivities. There are

<sup>14</sup> Chap. 2, st. 13, p. 10.



no long episodes nor tales of any kind, but brief digressions occur such as the description of man's age from seven years to fourscore and four, the "description of an envious and naughtie neighbour, and a dialogue between two Bachelers of wiving and thriving, by 'affirmation and negation,' and the maryed man's judgment thereof." Chap. 30 consists of *A Christmas Caroll of the birth of Christ upon the tune of King Salomon*. But the most characteristic feature of the whole poem is the use of pointed and practical maxims, such as

Let house have to fill her,  
Let land have to till her,  
No dwellers, what profiteth house for to stand?  
What goodness, unoccupied, bringeth the land?

and

No labor, no bread,  
No host we be dead,<sup>15</sup>

and so forth.

Like Palladius, Tusser scorns the aid of rhetoric; he writes:

What looke ye, I praie you shew what?  
Termes painted with Rhetorike fine  
Good husbandrie asketh not that,  
Nor ist any meaning of mine.<sup>16</sup>

Tusser's writings, like those of the translator of *Palladius*, show that he was a devout Christian. In one section, he names the "principal points of Religion"; in another he sums up in twenty-seven quatrains his "stedfast creede."<sup>17</sup> That his religious, as well as his agricultural, precepts are practical may be seen from the lines,

I do not doubt there is a multitude of saints.  
More good is done resembling them than shewing them our plaintes.  
Their faith and workes in Christ that glorie them did give,  
Which glorie we shall likewise have, if we do likewise live.<sup>18</sup>

Like the translator of the *Palladius*, Tusser is pleased to translate Latin. He has some lessons "out of S. Augustine"

<sup>15</sup> Chap. 6, p. 15.

<sup>16</sup> Chap. 5, st. 3, p. 14.

<sup>17</sup> ¶ 105, pp. 193-194; ¶ 106, pp. 194 ff.

<sup>18</sup> ¶ 106, st. 21, p. 198.



(pp. 200-201), and in ¶ 111, he gives "Eight of St. Barnard's Verses, both in Latin and English"; but, unlike the Middle English writer, he devotes a part of his poem to setting forth the main facts of his life.<sup>19</sup>

Altho Tusser's poem did not share the fate of *Palladius on Husbandrie*, but was read and reread,<sup>20</sup> and probably learned by heart, it has no definite interrelations with other georgics; it stands quite apart, an apparently unique achievement in English literature.

### 3. Sixteenth-Century Italian Poems on Agriculture

Luigi Alamanni's *Coltivazione*<sup>21</sup> is the earliest Vergilian georgic on agriculture discussed by the critics. Alamanni himself boasts of having been the first to follow in the footsteps of Vergil and of Hesiod.<sup>22</sup> Apparently he ignores such works as

<sup>19</sup> ¶ 113, p. 205, a division added to the edition of 1573.

<sup>20</sup> From 1557 to the end of the sixteenth century, Tusser's *Husbandrie* passed thru at least thirteen editions. "Yet all are scarce, and few of them surviving are perfect: a proof that what was intended for practical use had been sedulously applied to that purpose. 'Some books,' says Mr. Hazlewood in the *British Bibliographer* No. III, 'become heirlooms from value; and Tusser's work, for useful information in every department of agriculture, together with its quaint and amusing observations, perhaps passed the copies from father to son, till they crumbled away in the bare shifting of the pages and the mouldering relic only lost in value by the casual mutilation of time.'" E. D. S., 21, *Introd.*, xxii ff. For a catalog of the editions of Tusser from 1557-1744 see *The Five Hundred Points*, ed. W. Mavor, London, 1812, *Preliminary Dissertation*, pp. 17 ff.

<sup>21</sup> For a list of the editions of *La Colt.* see Hauvette, *op. cit.* App. iv, pp. 555-6.

<sup>22</sup> *Colt.*, I, 32-37, the poet addressing Francis I prays for aid:

Ch' io possa raccontar del pio Villano  
L'arte, l'opre, gl'ingegni, e le stagione:  
Che dovreste saper per pruova omai,  
Che dal favor di voi, non d'altri, potete  
Nascer virtù, che per le Tosche rive  
Or mi faccia seguir con degno piede  
Il chiaro Mantovan, l'antico Ascreo,  
E mostrar il camin che ascoso giace.

Poliziano's *Rusticus*, Pontano's *De Hortis Hesperidum*, Vida's *Bombyces*, and Rucellai's *Api*. But Poliziano, Pontano, and Vida wrote in Latin, and it is the theme of cultivation in general, not precepts concerning bees, that Alamanni proudly claims to have reintroduced to Italian poetry. Since Bonafede's precepts had never been published, one may reasonably conclude that the *Tesoro dei Rustici* was unknown to Alamanni.

*La Coltivazione* was not published until 1546. Hauvette<sup>23</sup> observes, however, that from the end of the year 1539 Alamanni had conceived the idea of writing a poem on field work.<sup>24</sup> The idea was undoubtedly suggested by Vergil, but possibly Rucellai's imitation of the *Bees* had something to do with it. The Tuscan poet's exile in France, his observation of the peasant life of a foreign country, probably aroused his interest in agriculture. The troubled state of his native land in contrast with the peace and prosperity of France made him reflect philosophically on the happiness of peasants working undisturbed in the fields; prepared him for something of the Vergilian mood.

*La Coltivazione* was written in fragments, a fact which helps to account for its faultiness of plan. It is in six books, numbering in all more than 5,000 lines, written in blank verse in

*Colt.*, I, 1134-37:

A te drizzo il mio stil; per te sono oso  
D'esser primo a versar nei lidi Toschi,  
Del divin fonte, che con tanto onore  
Sol conobbe, e gustò Mantova, ed Ascre.

*Colt.*, III, 15-19:

Voi mi potete sol menar al porto,  
Francesco invito, per questa onda sacra  
Che per lo addietro ancor non ebbe incareo  
D'altro legno Toscano; e primo ardiseo  
Pur col vostro favor dar vele ai venti.

<sup>23</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 264.

<sup>24</sup> Cp. the first lines of *Il Diluvio Romano*:

Io volea già cantar, gran re de' Franchi,  
L'arte, l'opre, gl'ingegni e le stagioni,  
Che fan verdi le piagge, i frutti ombrosi,  
Colmi i prati e' pastor d'erbe e di' gregge,  
E ricco il cacciator d'augelli e fere.



the Florentine tongue.<sup>25</sup> The first four books treat of agricultural labors of spring, summer, autumn, and winter, the fifth is of gardens, the sixth of lucky and unlucky days. Alamanni makes use of many sources,<sup>26</sup> but his debt to Vergil is by far the greatest. To quote Hauvette, "En dehors des nombreuses idées, images, expressions, où l'on reconnaît, un peu partout, l'écho des Géorgiques, à certains moments Alamanni a traduit plutôt que paraphrasé le poème de Virgile." The main features of the georgic are all present, except that Alamanni has no long episodes like the story of Aristaeus. But the poem is very far from the perfection of the Vergilian model. Only so enthusiastic a critic as Ginguené can fail to admit that the plan of *La Coltivazione* is not good. The first four books, of the Seasons, Hauvette remarks, are reasonable, if not artistic. Bk. v necessarily repeats observations about the seasons. Bk. vi entirely lacks originality, being merely a translation of Vergil. Ginguené comments upon it as a long fragment, to which, after having written it, the author is unable to assign a place. It has no prologue, no epilogue, no episodes. It begins abruptly with the choice of days; and ends abruptly with presages to be drawn from changes of weather, from the song, the flight, and the different habits of birds.

*La Coltivazione* is not, like the *Georgics*, preëminently a poem of Italy. Alamanni's inspiration<sup>27</sup> is French, not Italian. The dedication is to Francis I, and the poet eulogizes not his native land, but France. The country described, declares Hauvette, is that at the foot of the Alps, not at the foot of the Appenines. The fields of France inspired the Tuscan poet. When he speaks of Tuscan scenes and usages it is as of something remembered far away. His agricultural precepts are general, as his title indicates. He is thinking, it seems, of instructions concerning agriculture in all countries and at all

<sup>25</sup> Hauvette states that the publication of *La Colt.* in 1546 is important in the history of Italian blank verse. The meter is in general monotonous, but it led the way for others.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Ginguené, *op. cit.* p. 12; Hauvette, *op. cit.* p. 273.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Hauvette, *op. cit.* p. 269.



times. But so much for criticism. Hauvette observes that one of the merits most willingly ascribed to the poem is its faithful representation of what was then the culture in Tuscany.

No one can bring against Alamanni the accusation that *La Coltivazione* was not written primarily to instruct. On the contrary, the poet seems afraid that he will amuse. In his poem he expresses fear that farm laborers will give themselves up to laziness under the pretext of enjoying holidays. He prides himself on the avoidance of long digressions, intimating that Vergil sinned in this respect.<sup>28</sup> But Alamanni does not entirely avoid digressions, some of which are over-long and some of which are not well placed. The Golden Age, for example, is discussed in the middle of Bk. II, in an episode of more than one hundred and fifty lines. It is abruptly introduced, and ends by proposing Francis I as an example of a wise and happy life.

The description of the Golden Age is Horatian rather than Vergilian, altho Vergil is imitated in part. Alamanni brings out the point that necessity begot invention; but he does not touch on Vergil's belief that it was for man's benefit that Father Jove instituted cares. He emphasizes the truth that it is man's destiny to suffer, and that he must submit. Yet, altho the Tuscan poet reflects upon the bitterness of human life and the quick coming of weary old age and death,<sup>29</sup> he dwells philosophically on the truth that thru reproduction Nature secures to her creatures immortality; and unlike Tusser, he looks with envious idealization on the peasant state, deciding that it is possible to show future generations that his age so "neghittoso e vil, non dorme in tutto."<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Hauvette, *op. cit.* pp. 280 ff.; *Colt.*, III, 20-25:

Non mi vedrete andar con larghi giri  
Traviando sovente a mio diporto,  
Per lidi ameni, ove più frondi, e fiori  
Si ritrovan talor che frutti ascosi;  
Ma per dritto sentier mostrando aperto  
I tempi, e'l buon oprar del pio cultore.

<sup>29</sup> *Colt.*, I, 330 ff.

<sup>30</sup> *Colt.*, I, 599 ff.

The opinion has been ventured that Alamanni's precepts have been of benefit to peasants;<sup>31</sup> Hauvette thinks that this is not likely. The success of the poem in the sixteenth century he believes due largely to its classic form. The reading public was not especially interested in agriculture, but resigned itself to the subject only because Alamanni followed in the footsteps of Hesiod and Vergil.<sup>32</sup>

The true vogue of *La Coltivazione* begins in the eighteenth century. From 1716 to 1781 the poem was printed twenty times, and the Italians venerated Alamanni as a glorious ancestor, altho France, unaccountably, and in Ginguené's opinion, inexcusably, neglected him.

In general, Italian critics praise the poem highly. Ginguené's praise is extravagant; but he avows sadly, "*La Coltivazione* est un des poèmes les plus vantés qui existent dans la langue Italienne, mais ce n'est pas un de ceux qu'on lit le plus; l'austerité de sujet en est sans doute la cause,"<sup>33</sup> The French critic seems to recognize no other cause; but his judgment is not more surprising than that of the Italian poet, Parini,<sup>34</sup> who pronounces *La Coltivazione* one of the books that it is a reproach not to have read.

Read after Ginguené, Hauvette's discussion of *La Coltivazione* is refreshing; but more than this, it is the most illuminating work that I have seen on the subject, valuable as literary history, and as criticism. Hauvette is certainly uninfluenced by older writers on the Tuscan poet; he considers with equal fairness the defects and the merits of the poem: and Hauvette is probably the critic best fitted to speak of Alamanni and of his work.

Historically considered, *La Coltivazione* is of interest; anyone with a predilection for georgic poetry might read parts of

<sup>31</sup> M. E. Percopo, *Gesch. der ital. Lit.*, p. 347. See Hauvette, *op. cit.* p. 280.

<sup>32</sup> From 1546 to 1549 there were four editions of *La Collt.*, after which it was not reprinted until 1590. Cp. Hauvette, *op. cit.* p. 300.

<sup>33</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 11.

<sup>34</sup> *Principii delle belle lettere* (Opere, Milan, 1804). Vol. vi, p. 205. See Hauvette, *op. cit.* p. 301.



it with pleasure, but it is very hard to understand how it can excite rapturous praise. A modern critic of unprejudiced mind can hardly fail to pronounce it overlong, badly planned, and as a whole, very tedious.

Altho many sixteenth-century Italians wrote georgics, no one of the age seems to have imitated Alamanni by writing a serious and lengthy verse treatise on Agriculture.<sup>35</sup> In 1560 Luigi Tansillo wrote *Il Podere*,<sup>36</sup> a didactic which reads like the introductory chapters of a general treatise on rustic affairs. Tansillo, however, does not take his subject over seriously. The poem is divided into three brief "capitoli,"<sup>37</sup> which he himself describes as "rime basse e versi giocosi."<sup>38</sup> Capitolo I treats of the choice of location, capitolo II mainly of the diversities of lands, and of how to know good soils, capitolo III, of the building of the house.

The poet, familiarly conversing with a friend<sup>39</sup> who has recently expressed a desire to buy a farm, attempts to teach in a few words what he himself has learned in years. He repeats many familiar maxims and imitates other favorite georgic conventions.<sup>40</sup> He emphasizes the value of toil, but the theme is treated less seriously than in the poems of Vergil and Alamanni. One would hardly characterize *Il Podere* as a "glorification of labor." The praise of country life in contrast to city evils, and the precepts concerning soils are the most Vergilian features of the poem.

The poet's friend is advised to buy what costs least and

<sup>35</sup> Thos. Kirchmayer's *Agricoltura Sacra* (Basil, 1550), translated by Barnaby Googe as *The Boke of Spiritual Husbandry*, is an equally serious attempt of an allegorical nature. See above, p. 42.

<sup>36</sup> *L'Egloga e i Poemetti*, con introd. e note di Francesco Flamini, Napoli, 1893. The poem was printed for the first time at Turin, 1769.

<sup>37</sup> In all, 1158 verses of smoothly-flowing *terza rima*.

<sup>38</sup> Cp. Letter to Antonio Scarampi, Flamini, *op. cit.*, p. xcix.

<sup>39</sup> Signor Giovan Battista Venere. See dedication to the poem. Flamini, *op. cit.* p. 195.

<sup>40</sup> The poem lacks the stock opening, the address to the Muse, the address to a patron, the panegyric, the marking of time by the constellations, the discussion of weather signs, and the long narrative episode.



pleases most; to consider what will be best for physical well-being and for peace of mind; and finally to choose a mountainous region because of the view. Tansillo makes no pretense of delivering precepts for the benefit of an uneducated peasantry.

Like Alamanni, he makes a strong point of evils due to bad neighbors,<sup>41</sup> and like Alamanni, he has a digression arising from this theme. But Alamanni has a long and serious episode on emigrations ancient and modern. Tansillo gaily tells Æsop's fable of the tortoise who asked the privilege of carrying her house on her back, in order to be able to avoid at will distasteful neighbors. The theme of present-day corruptions appears in the poet's denunciation of the ravages made by the "galeoti" along the Neapolitan coasts, while Naples sleeps! The poet professes himself a man of peace, but he considers it his country's duty to make war against such outrages.<sup>42</sup>

Discoursing on the differences of soils, he pauses to give a brief account of the Golden Age,<sup>43</sup> and the evil times that followed, due, according to his version, to the theft of the heavenly fire and the plucking of the forbidden apple.

He adorns his moralizations on the effects of thrift and industry by telling Æsop's fable of the dying man who requested his sons to dig for buried treasure in their vineyard,<sup>44</sup> and by narrating Pliny's story of the husbandman tried for sorcery because of the great produce of his small farm.<sup>45</sup>

A discussion on roadways leads to a digression on the subject of woman,<sup>46</sup> lines not paralleled, so far as I have discovered, in any other georgic.

<sup>41</sup> *Collt.*, iv, 354 ff.; *Pod.*, i, 357 ff. Op. also *Praedium Rusticum*, i, p. 7 ff.

<sup>42</sup> *Pod.*, ii, 121-147. A reference to foreign countries occurs in this same passage.

<sup>43</sup> *Pod.*, ii, 163-188.

<sup>44</sup> *Pod.*, ii, 190 ff.

<sup>45</sup> *Pod.*, ii, 201 ff. René Rapin, *Horti*, iv, 124 ff., tells the same story, making the hero a "farmer of the Marsic race," who shows his well-polished implements and produces his stout wife and daughter as accomplices in his magic arts. Delille, *L'Homme de Champs*, ii, 90 ff., repeats the story, but cites his source, *Plinii Hist. Nat.*, l. xviii, sect. viii, C. Furius Cresinus, a liberated slave, the accused.

<sup>46</sup> *Pod.*, iii, 28 ff. Tansillo shows himself very generous-minded towards

Considering his friend's spiritual needs, the poet advises him to have a "*magion di santo*"<sup>47</sup> nearby. Thus his soul will have more advantages than if he were in the city. The city has more pastimes, but it has also more evils. Blessed is he who realizes his happiness among cultivated hills and valleys and fields. Happy he who knows the causes of things, and can tread underfoot all fears of fate and death.<sup>48</sup> But happier he who having seen the world betakes himself to the country, and gives himself to God. "Would that I," cries the poet, "might betake myself to the plains at the foot of a mountain, and there amid the joys of family life put into practice the arts taught in writing by Cato, Vergil, Pliny, Columella,<sup>49</sup> and the others." An idyll of the innocent joys of country life follows, with a companion picture, politely satirical, of the luxury, the hollowness, and the vices of city life.

The unexpected close of the poem, writes Flamini, is worthy of note. It is particularly worthy of note as the conclusion of a georgic. After a number of varied precepts concerning the building of the house and its situation among gardens and woods, Tansillo affects to discover that his friend is in love. Encouraging him, the poet cries:

Ed io vi dico: Fratel mio, segufte,  
Segufte Amor . . . . .  
Ché sembra un' alma, dove Amor non stanze,  
Casa di notte senza foco o face!<sup>50</sup>

following his advice with a digression on the theory of love, after which he remarks: "While I believed that we were going

the weaker sex. It is both interesting and edifying to know that a sixteenth-century Italian thought it worth while to remind noble gentlemen that they are not savage consorts, that women are not beasts of the stable, that their pleasure must be considered, and that if you take them to the country you must provide ways by which they may occasionally have something more interesting to look at than trees and hedges.

<sup>47</sup> *Pod.*, III, 46 ff.

<sup>48</sup> *Pod.*, III, 46-87. Cp. *Georg.*, II, 475-495.

<sup>49</sup> "Columella," says Flamini, "is the source among the ancients most freely plundered by Tansillo." *Op. cit.*, Introd., p. c.

<sup>50</sup> *Pod.*, III, 334-339.



to a country place, our feet were leading us to the forest of Love.  
Here let the way be ended,"

Qual il poder si compri, io v'ho già mostro  
A consiglio d'antichi e di moderni,  
Perché sia buono e degno d'esser vostro.  
Se gli affanni domestici o gli esterni  
Non m'impediscon, forse, un dì di questi,  
Dirò come si tratte e si governi.<sup>21</sup>

The poem ends with the regret that few indeed come to honor  
Flora, Pomona, Ceres, and Leneus:

Ma non possan mai punto abbandonarlo;  
E quanto scrisse il Mantovan, l'Ascreo,  
Il Greco e'l Moro, e chi 'n sul Tebro nacque,  
Di buon vi venga, e fuggane di reo;  
E piaccia sempre a voi più che non piacque,  
El al produrre ed al servir de' frutti,  
Propizie egli abbia le stagioni e l'acque  
L'aure e le stelle e gli elementi tutti.

*Il Podere* has been praised as among the most brilliant writings of Tansillo's time. Certainly it is one of the few really charming imitations of the *Georgics*, an interesting illustration of the possibilities of the type. The poet is inspired by no high call to instruct a nation, and he makes no claim to tread heights untrodden before. He has no episodes descriptive of nature; and he does not write as if from experience of the joys of country life,—rather as if he has read much of them and dreamed more. Flaminio says of *Il Podere* that it is a free and judicious imitation; it is an imitation made alive by a gracious personality, and the sure touch of the artist who writes sometimes lightly, sometimes earnestly, but always simply and naturally, because his heart is in what he has to say.

*Il Podere* is a slight work. Naturally it will not bear comparison with Vergil's *Georgics*, and had Tansillo attempted a serious agricultural treatise he would probably have failed. But

<sup>21</sup> *Pod.*, III, 364. Tansillo never fulfilled his promise, but in 1566 he wrote of the rearing of infants in *La Balia* (printed 1767). Tusser, in the *Five Hundred Pointes*, ¶ 92, treats the same subject under the heading, "The Good Motherlie Nurserie."



he was wise enough to realize the scope of his powers, and in his third *capitolo* he succeeded in achieving a poem that even the stern critic Carducci praises.<sup>52</sup>

#### 4. *Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Poems on Agriculture*

From the sixteenth to the eighteenth century the poets seem to have wisely avoided the theme of general agriculture. In the eighteenth century proof of this wisdom may be had in the dreary efforts of de Rosset, Vanière, and Dodsley.

Pierre Larousse<sup>53</sup> gives a brief account of de Rosset's nine books on *Agriculture*, which may be summed up as follows: The poem treats successively fields, vines, woods, meadows, poultry yards, plants, kitchen gardens, pleasure gardens, pools, and fish ponds. The writer uses some bizarre digressions concerning the vine, beginning with a description of the deluge, and ending with an account of carnival. The verses are, in general, lacking in color and relief, but there are some agreeable details and some successful passages.

Wordsworth<sup>54</sup> is said to have borrowed from de Rosset, but so far as I know, *L'Agriculture* is otherwise a poem of no especial influence.

Jacques Vanière's *Praedium Rusticum* is an even more thoroughgoing agricultural treatise than that of de Rosset, since it consists of no less than sixteen books, in all, nearly ten thousand lines of Latin verse on almost every subject connected with country life, from the buying and keeping up of a country estate, to details concerning the chase.

Vanière began by publishing several short Latin poems, georgic in character. Encouraged by their success, he used

<sup>52</sup> That *Il Podere* was not printed during the poet's lifetime was probably due to his own desire. Flamini, *op. cit.* p. 104, cites five editions that appeared between the first imprint of 1768 and 1810. The didactics of Tansillo seem to have shared the vogue of *La Coltivazione* in the eighteenth century.

<sup>53</sup> *Op. cit.*, cp. above, p. 5.

<sup>54</sup> See Émile Legouis, *The Early Life of William Wordsworth*, tr. by J. W. Matthews, London, J. M. Dent and Co., 1897, p. 143, notes 1 and 2.

them as part of the *Praedium Rusticum* which was published at Toulouse in 1730. The entire poem was translated into French by Bertrand d'Halouvry in 1756, after the author's death. According to Pierre Larousse<sup>55</sup> "de l'aveu des meilleurs critiques, il s'est approché de Virgile autant qu'il est permis aux poètes latins modernes de le faire." Perhaps these words may serve as a warning to modern poets not to attempt to write Latin verse. Yet the *Praedium Rusticum* is a poem not without merit and interest, to anyone who has the patience to read it. Writers on the georgic such as Delille, de Rosset, and Saint Lambert<sup>56</sup> consider it in their discussions; and certainly it is of value as an illustration of the curious hold that the georgic type had on the eighteenth-century mind, and of the fashion in which the same conventions and the same themes recur over and over again in georgic poetry.<sup>57</sup>

Dodsley's *Agriculture*<sup>58</sup> appeared in 1754, three cantos, written in blank verse. The first canto is mainly introductory, dealing with general advantages of the farmer's life; but various farm implements are recommended, and technically described. The second canto treats of soils and trees, the third of harvest.

In the preface Dodsley states his limitations, admitting that he has little learning;<sup>59</sup> but his poem shows that he is well acquainted with the Vergilian didactics and that he has great reverence for his model. Altho he does not imitate the unity of plan in the *Georgics*, he carefully follows the georgic conventions.

The poem is addressed to the Prince of Wales; Pure Intelli-

<sup>55</sup> *Op. cit.* vol. xv, p. 764.

<sup>56</sup> See above, p. 5.

<sup>57</sup> In the Paris edition of 1746, marginal notes aid the reader in a study of the author's use of georgic features. This volume is of especial value because of the delightful woodcuts that adorn each book.

<sup>58</sup> Robt. Anderson: *Brit. Poets*, vol. xi. Dodsley had planned to write in three books (I, Agriculture; II, Commerce; III, Arts) a poem entitled *Public Virtue*. He completed only the first book.

<sup>59</sup> This fact is noteworthy, for all the other imitators of the *Georgics*, unless Falconer be classed among them, are men familiar with the classics from youth.



gence, "Genius of Britain," is invoked. The Muse figures prominently. She disdains, be it noted, idle themes, and the farmer is bidden to attend her and thus become frugal and blest; so shall Industry give him peace, while the Great, diseased by luxury and sloth, envy him.

A narrative episode tells the romantic tale of a milkmaid, Patty, whose conventional charms, "ivory teeth," "lips of living coral," and "breath sweeter than the morning gale," win the love of Thyrsis, who, altho he is her social superior, marries her and lives with her in a state of Golden Age happiness.

Dodsley's imitation of Vergil's "O fortunatos nimium"<sup>60</sup> is, perhaps, the more pleasing for the poet's lack of Latin. He knows the meaning of the simple life, and has learned to value truly "the gracious nothing of a great man's nod." The passage ends with the religious note that "rural joys invite to sacred thought and meditation on God."<sup>61</sup>

Being an eighteenth-century poet, and an imitator of Vergil, Dodsley burns to explore the secret ways of sweet Philosophy, but he particularly desires to know the causes of fruitfulness in the vegetable world, and because of this desire he ventures upon an allegory in which he attempts to explain the theory of vegetation.

The second canto has many echoes of Vergil; and Thomson's influence can be seen. The poet's dreams of an ideal estate are eighteenth-century dreams in accord with the new English fashions of landscape gardening, and are based on an intimate and loving knowledge of Shenstone's Leasowes and Lyttleton's Hagley.

The canto closes with a passage on the lessons of Epicurus, emphasizing the belief that the end of life is happiness, and virtue the means to that end. The whole passage is a rhapsody on the blessings of retired rural life.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup> *Agricult.*, I, 299 ff. Cp. *Georg.* II.

<sup>61</sup> Cp. the conclusion of Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination*, Bk. III, original version.

<sup>62</sup> Cp. the conclusion of *Georg.* II.



In the third canto, harvesting, the products of England's soil, and the care of cattle are discussed. In the section on harvesting the poet dwells on the ills that constantly threaten life, treating the subject with an eighteenth-century note, in a prayer to Heaven to protect the farmer from the carelessness of the huntsman.<sup>63</sup> Dodsley makes also an outcry against the oppressions of the rich, but he very justly dwells upon the fact that some wise and good masters still exist.

In a visit to the happy Patty of Canto 1, precepts are delivered concerning cheesemaking and the care of horses, the latter topic calling forth a protest against the unnecessary cruelty of drivers of draught horses.<sup>64</sup> The poem closes with an address to the Prince of Wales, in georgic spirit urging him to embrace the arts of peace rather than the arts of war.

Dodsley's poem is not a long and detailed treatise on agriculture like the works of de Rosset and Vanière, but it has been less considered than even those ill-fated efforts. It can hardly be called good poetry, altho it has some pleasing passages. It is interesting partly because it illustrates eighteenth-century habits of thought, chiefly because Dodsley wrote it. That one of the most successful of London booksellers, associated with the most brilliant men of his time, thought it worth while to write a georgic, is significant of the literary indulgence, if not of the literary taste, of the period. That the complete design of the poet was not carried out indicates that there were limits to the endurance even of the eighteenth century. That Dodsley realized the imperfections of his poem, and that he received some encouragement regarding it, may be seen from the words of Horace Walpole,<sup>65</sup> "I am sorry you think it any trouble for me to peruse your poem again. I always read it with pleasure."

Erasmus Darwin might be expected to have written a georgic, but he did not. The nearest approach that he made to following

<sup>63</sup> Cp. Shenstone, *Rural Elegance*, st. 2; Gay, *Rural Sports*, 281 ff.; Somerville, *The Chase*, I, 51 ff.

<sup>64</sup> Cp. Gay, *Trivia*, II, 231 ff.

<sup>65</sup> *Letters of Horace Walpole*, ed. Mrs. Paget Toynbee, Oxford, 1903, vol. III, p. 195.

this literary fashion is found in his *Phytologia, or the Philosophy of Agriculture and Gardening*, a prose work published at London and at Dublin in 1800,<sup>68</sup> in which, at intervals, he breaks into verse.

Discussing the effect of winds, Darwin quotes the old proverb,

The wind from north-east  
Destroys man and beast:  
The wind from south-west  
Is always the best.<sup>67</sup>

He translates into rimed couplets Vergil's lines on grafting;<sup>68</sup> and he concludes a section on the art of producing flower-buds with a verse quotation from the *Botanic Garden*.<sup>69</sup> In concluding his observations on fruits, he prefaces a poetic outburst on the "Art of Pruning Wall Trees" with the remark, "The following lines are inserted to amuse the reader, and to imprint some of the foregoing doctrine on his memory."<sup>70</sup> To show what Darwin might have done in the way of a georgic, I quote a specimen of this outburst on the "Art of Pruning Wall Trees":

Behead new-grafted trees in spring,  
Ere the first cuckoo tries to sing;  
But leave four swelling buds to grow  
With wide-diverging arms below;

and another still more characteristic specimen from *The Art of Pruning Melons and Cucumbers*:

When melon, cucumber and gourd,  
Their two first rougher leaves afford  
Ere yet these second leaves advance  
Arm'd with fine knife or scissors good  
Bisect or clip the central bud:  
Whence many a lateral branch instead  
Shall rise like hydra's fabled head.  
When the fair belles in gaudy rows  
Salute their vegetable beaux;

<sup>68</sup> My citations are from the London edition.

<sup>67</sup> Sect. XIII, p. 306.

<sup>68</sup> Sect. xv, p. 391.

<sup>69</sup> Sect. xv, p. 412. Cp. *The Botanic Garden*, vol. I, canto 4, l. 465.

<sup>70</sup> Sect. xv, p. 429.



And, as they lose their virgin bloom,  
Shew, ere it swells, the pregnant womb;  
Lop, as each crowded branch extends,  
The barren flowers and leafy ends.

He concludes a section on leaves and wood with a poetic address to Swilcar Oak,<sup>71</sup> which he thinks "may amuse the weary reader." And his final outburst is really a brief georgic on the cultivation of Brocoli, translated in part from the elegant Latin poem of Edward Tighe, Esq.<sup>72</sup> This remarkable production begins as follows:

There are of learned taste, who still prefer  
Cos-lettuce, tarragon, and cucumber;  
There are, who still with equal praises yoke  
Young peas, asparagus, and artichoke;  
Beaux there are still with lamb and spinach nurs'd,  
And clowns eat beans and bacon, till they burst.  
This boon I ask of Fate, where'er I dine,  
O, be the Proteus form of cabbage mine!—  
Cale, colewort, cauliflower, or soft and clear  
If Brocoli delight thy nicer ear.  
Give, rural Muse! the culture and the name  
In verse immortal to the rolls of Fame.

Directions follow for sowing cabbage seed, hoeing the young plants, etc., the time for each successive labor being marked by the zodiacal sign; and the effort concludes with the following address to the writer whose "elegant Latin verses are in part translated":

Oft in each month, poetic Tighe, be thine  
To dish green Brocoli with savory chine;  
Oft down thy tuneful throat be thine to cram  
The snow-white cauliflower with fowl and ham!—  
Nor envy thou, with such rich viands blest,  
The pye of Perigord, or Swallow's nest.

In 1809, James Grahame published at Edinburgh a quarto volume of three hundred and forty pages in blank verse, entitled

<sup>71</sup> Sect. XVIII, p. 528.

<sup>72</sup> Sect. XIX, p. 560. I have not been able to identify Edward Tighe. He might be the Edward Tighe, M. P. for Wicklow, 1790, named in Burke's *Genealogical and Heraldic Hist. of the Landed Gentry of Ireland*.



*British Georgics.* An interesting criticism of the poem is given in the *Edinburgh Review*.<sup>73</sup> An idea of the style of this lengthy effort may be had from a number of extracts quoted, mostly descriptive passages, and those in which "the author's tenderness and kindness of heart . . . is very conspicuous." The comment on the title, "British Georgics," is of particular interest: "The 'Georgics' may be, as Mr. Grahame assures us, the proper appellation for all treatises of husbandry in verse, the 'Scottish Farmer's Kalendar' would have been a little more descriptive of the plan and substance of the work before us. The scenery Scotch, the poem divided into twelve parts or sections arranged in order, and under the names of the twelve months of the year, with full directions for all farm work in each month respectively."

The writer in the *Review* expresses the opinion that the poem will not remove the general objections to didactic poetry. He is convinced that no practical farmer will be willing to become instructed thru the medium of blank verse, and lovers of poetry, he believes, will become discouraged by the precepts that would interest the farmer if written in a less ambitious form. The conclusion of the critic with regard to the poem is very generous not only to Mr. Grahame, but to all writers and to all readers of georgics. "They who do read on, however," he declares, "will be rewarded, we think, by many pleasing and beautiful passages; and even those, whose natures are too ungentle to admire this kind of poetry, must love the characters from which it proceeds, and which it has so strong a tendency to form."

The *British Georgics* seem to have been the last serious attempt at a didactic dealing with general agricultural precepts.<sup>74</sup> If any other poems of this nature were written, even their names have become lost to the public; and Grahame's work, far from "removing the general objections to didactic poetry," has, itself, almost completely passed into oblivion.

<sup>73</sup> 1810, vol. xvi, p. 213 ff.

<sup>74</sup> Altho Francis Jammes' poem *Les Géorgiques chrétiennes* treats of agricultural labors, it cannot be said to deal with precepts concerning agriculture. See above, pp. 46-47.

## CHAPTER V

## DIDACTIC POEMS ON GARDENS

1. *From Columella to William Mason*

Vergil, regretting that he is debarred by scanty space<sup>1</sup> from lingering on the theme of "Gardens," leaves it to others who will come after him.<sup>2</sup> Columella<sup>2</sup> was the first to undertake the task. He begins his *Carmen de Cultu Hortorum*:

Hortorum quoque te cultus, Silvius, docebo,  
Atque ea, quae quondam spatiis exclusus iniquis,  
Cum caneret laetas segetes et munera Bacchi,  
Et te, magna Pales, nec non caelestia mella,  
Vergilius nobis post se memoranda reliquit.

This introduction is followed by precepts on gardening; such matters as soils, sites and irrigation being treated in detail. Vergil is imitated in the use of mythological allusions, in the marking of time by the constellations, and in references to the products of foreign countries; but in the later writer's work there is nothing of Vergil's imagination, Vergil's delicacy of perception, Vergil's brotherhood with all things that live and grow. Columella was no doubt moved by a pious motive, but it would, perhaps, have been as wise had he written the tenth book of the *De Re Rustica* in prose.

In the centuries immediately after Columella, other writers may have been moved to avail themselves of Vergil's legacy; but they either found themselves unequal to the task of the didactic on gardens, or the public failed in appreciation of their efforts. In medieval monasteries, however, delight in nature found expression in verse. Agriculture flourished under the care of skilled monks, and gardening was a recreation as well

<sup>1</sup> *Georg.*, iv, 147-148.

<sup>2</sup> Columella lived in the 1st c. A. D. See above, p. 28. The tenth book of his treatise on agriculture is written in hexameters. *Rei Rusticae Liber Decimus*. Vpsalae, 1902.



as a labor. "The idyll of the cloister garden so often treated became famous in the much-read *Hortulus* of Wahlafried,"<sup>3</sup> a brief poem belonging to the ninth century, in which the writer tells in detail how he works with his own hands in his garden, and describes his herbs and flowers, lingering upon their uses and their loveliness. The poem shows classical influence; the first lines and the conclusion, with its address to Grimald, suggest the character of the georgic; but Wahlafried evidently made no effort to follow the Vergilian plan, and he makes no allusion to Vergil's bequest of the theme of gardens. The *Hortulus* can hardly be said to have any plan. The first part tells of the poet's work in his garden; the remainder is divided into sections treating of different herbs and flowers, one variety following the other quite indiscriminately. First one reads of lilies and poppies, then of plants useful as medicines and in the kitchen. The lines on radishes are followed by a description of the rose. Yet there are in the poem graceful and poetic touches, and at least it can be said that Wahlafried writes with more imagination of the rose than of the radish.

From the ninth to the fifteenth century there is a blank in the history of the didactic on gardens. Then Palladius was translated into English verse, and "Mayster Ion Gardener"<sup>4</sup> wrote his curious verses on the theme with which, one might judge from his name, he was most familiar. There is nothing more than his name by which to judge, for, so far, he has not been identified. The poem was apparently written somewhere between 1440 and 1450. The title heading of the manuscript, "The Feate of Gardening," is added in a later hand. The dialect of the poem points to Kent, which was famous for gardens and orchards.

The Middle English Palladius has a number of interesting

<sup>3</sup> A. Biese, *op. cit.*, p. 61. Walafrid, or Wahlafried Strabo, abbot of Reichenau, d. 849. The *Hortulus* has been published in a number of Latin collections. See Migne, *Patr. Lat.* Paris, 1852, vol. 114, pp. 1119-1130.

<sup>4</sup> "On a Fifteenth Century Treatise on Gardening. By Mayster Ion Gardener." With remarks communicated by the Hon. Alicia M. Tyssen Amherst. *Archaeologia*, 1894, pp. 157 ff.



pages on gardening; but John Gardener's verses are more interesting because the "Feate of Gardening" is not only the earliest English poem on this subject, but, so far as I know, the earliest English georgic on any subject. The poem, itself, is rude doggerel, of value in the history of English gardens, as in the history of the didactic on English gardens. John Gardener's instructions are very sensible and reasonable, very free, Mrs. Amherst remarks, from superstitions regarding astrology, and from extravagant fancies in grafting and growing plants. Equally free is the poet from rhetorical ambitions. In such direct fashion does the *Feate of Gardening* begin:

Ho so wyl a gardener be  
 Here he may both hyre & se  
 Every time of the ȝere and of the mone  
 And how the crafte shall be done  
 Yn what maner he shall delve & sette  
 Bothe yn drowthe and yn wette  
 How he shall hys sedys sowe  
 Of euery moneth he most knowe  
 Bothe of wortys and of leke  
 Ownyns and of garleke  
 Percely clarey and eke sage  
 And all other herbage.

The following lines on parsley illustrate John Gardener's method of imparting precepts and show the pleasant quality of his rude verse:

Percell kynde ys for to be  
 To be sow yn þe monthe of mars so mote y the  
 He wul grow long and thykke  
 And ever as he growyth þu schalt hym kytte  
 Þu may hym kytte by resoun  
 Dries yn one seson

In the matter of superstitions, John Gardener's reasonableness contrasts strongly with the Middle English Palladius, of which the pages are adorned with curious suggestions. There is advised, for example, as a remedy against hail, the planting of white vines around the garden, or the setting up of an owl with outstretched wings. Thus writes the translator:

Gird eke thi garth aboute in vynes white;  
 Or, sprad the wynges oute, sette up an oule.  
 Whi laugh ye so? this craft is not so lite.  
 Or take thi spades, rake, knyff, and shovelle  
 And evry tole in beres grees defoule,  
 Eke sum have stamped oile with grees of beres  
 To greece her vyne knyff for dyveres deres.

But that a man must doo full prively,  
 That never a warkman wite, and this is goode  
 For frost, and myst, and wormes sekirly.  
 But as I trust in X that shedde his bloode  
 For us, who tristeth this Y hold him wode.  
 Myn author eke, (whoo list in him travaille!)  
 Seith this prophaned thyng may nought availe.<sup>6</sup>

John Gardener's treatise was certainly uninfluenced by the beliefs of Palladius; nor does he show acquaintance with literary models of any kind. He wrote, evidently, from practical experience, perhaps, like the translator of the Palladius, at some special request or command. His verses mark the rude beginnings that culminate in such "elegant" attempts as those of Mr. Mason's *English Garden*, as Paganino Bonafede's<sup>6</sup> beginnings culminate in such works as *La Coltivazione* and *Il Canapajo*.

In the sixteenth century, I know of only one poem on the subject of the cultivation of gardens, Giuseppe Milio Voltolina's *Della Coltura degli Orti*, published at Brescia in the year 1574.<sup>7</sup> Tiraboschi mentions an essay by Cardinal Querini in which this work is highly praised; and he remarks also that had Père Rapin known of Voltolina's poem he would not have boasted of having been the first to write of gardens.

In the *Five hundred Pointes of Good Husbandry* Thomas Tusser has some stanzas on gardening, in which he gives general rules for the recognition of good soil, and tells the reader when and how to "sow and set."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Palladius, op. cit.*, p. 31.

<sup>7</sup> See above, p. 29.

<sup>8</sup> Tiraboschi, *op. cit.*, T. VII, p. 2137.

<sup>9</sup> 46-48 ff. In "Marches Abstract," 38, Tusser gives long lists of various seeds, herbs, and flowering plants, naming their uses and the time to sow and set them.



The fifth book of Alamanni's *Coltivazione* is of gardens "come si coltivano in ogni stagione," but the Tuscan poet does not mention the fact that he is developing the theme that Vergil regretted to leave unsung. The book begins with an invitation to Priapus, followed by an extravagant eulogy of King Francis and a tribute to the gardens of Fontainebleau. The poet treats digging and manuring, and the varieties of flowers, moralizing on the power of industry and art to accomplish all things and digressing at great length on the differences in animals, men, and races.

He sings of flowers; roses, lilies and hyacinths; and of the tree of the Hesperides, the golden fruit of the tropics; of humble but equally useful plants, artichokes, cucumbers, gourds, onions, etc.; but he makes little more appeal to the imagination when he writes of roses and hyacinths than when he talks of cucumbers and gourds. However, his practical advice is worth considering; his pious selections seem none the less devout, his account of the small annoyances of gardening none the less depressing, because they are what one expects to find in a mediocre georgic.

Altho Columella is one of Alamanni's sources,<sup>9</sup> the tenth book of the *De Re Rustica* is neither used nor referred to by the Florentine poet. However, in his book on gardens, Alamanni does not claim, as does René Rapin, to explore

With bold attempt a way untrod before.

Rapin's *Horti*,<sup>10</sup> one of the very few georgics to be found in the seventeenth century, is in four books: "Of Gardens," "Of Trees," "Of Waters," and "Of Orchards," all systematically planned and written according to the Vergilian model, all imitating carefully the Vergilian motives.

In the preface Rapin defends his methods, particularly his digressions, and his selection of only the more general fruits. His digressions, he says, are warranted by the practice of the

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Ginguené, *op. cit.*, p. 12; Hauvette, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

<sup>10</sup> Paris, 1665.



Greek poets, his use of selection by the example of Vergil. The end of didactic poetry, declares Rapin, is to instruct, and this is the chief end of poetry in general. The moral, however, does not shoot "point blank," but hits the mark none the less effectively. The great art of poetry is that of pleasing, whence it persuades, and herein it excels even philosophy, whose sole aim is to inform the understanding.

Rapin lives up to his principle of not shooting the moral point blank, for he digresses continually, telling a story about almost every flower he names. An interesting episode arises from an account of the uses of flowers; the story of a happy swain, who raised flowers for the curing of ills. Rapin here suggests the writing of a medicinal georgic, but leaves the task to someone else.<sup>11</sup>

Rapin's poem is particularly interesting for its precepts concerning formal gardening. Box hedges, straight gravel walks, and the esplanade, delight the poet's eye. He would have shuddered at the thought of the "studied negligence" of the English garden.

Hallam<sup>12</sup> writes of Rapin: "For skill in varying and adorning his subject, for truly Vergilian spirit in expression, for the exclusion of feeble, prosaic or awkward lines, he may perhaps be equal to any poet, to Sannazarius himself. His cadences are generally very gratifying to the ear, and in this respect he is much above Vida. But his subject or his genius has prevented him from rising very high; he is the poet of gardens, and what gardens are to nature, that is he to mightier poets." Yet while the difficulties of Rapin's theme can easily be granted, remembering Vergil, one hardly hesitates to say that it is Rapin's genius, not his subject, that prevents him from rising very high.

Rapin's *Horti* was translated into French and English, and like other georgics, seems to have been most widely read in the

<sup>11</sup> See above, p. 42.

<sup>12</sup> *Introd. to the Lit. of Europe in the 15th, 16th, and 17th c.* In 3 vols., Boston, 1854; vol. III, p. 491.

eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup> In 1728, Bernard Lintot, the publisher of James Gardiner's translation, observes that books of gardening were in great vogue, and gentlemen were curious about looking into them. He does not share Hallam's doubts regarding Rapin's genius and his subject, for he writes: "I will be bold to say that there is nothing in the whole Art of Gardening which is not to be found in Rapin, and that adorned with all the embellishments and Advantages that the greatest genius of his age could possibly give to so pleasant a subject in poetical dress." "Compare," adds Lintot, "the judicious Mr. Evelyn's opinion of it." The "judicious Mr. Evelyn" ends his *Sylva or Discourse of Forest Trees*, with the following encomium: "I conclude this book and whole discourse, of that incomparable Poem of Rapinus, as epitomizing all we have said. I cannot therefore but wonder that excellent Piece, so elegant, pleasant, and instructive, should be no more inquired after." Lintot continues: "It would be superfluous after this one encomium of Mr. Evelyn's, considering his character for veracity, Judgment in Poetry, and Skill in Gardening, to add any more in praise of the Original."

Lintot adds that he has been enjoined to silence concerning the translator, but he cannot forbear to raise his voice in praise, and after Rapin's preface he prints several poems in Latin and in English, encomiums of Mr. Gardiner's excellent translation.

Mr. Gardiner's translation is done in eighteenth-century couplets, in eighteenth-century style. His poem might very easily pass for an early eighteenth-century production, but it does not abound in the circumlocutions so prevalent in the georgics of the period, and Rapin's formal gardens are in striking contrast to the landscapes of Knight and Mason and Delille.

<sup>13</sup> The second French translation in prose, printed with the Latin text, is by MM. Vyron and Cabirot, a new ed., Paris, 1802. It was suggested by a reading of Delille's *Jardins*. An English translation appeared in London, 1673, Cambridge, 1706. (the year of the publication of Philip's *Cyder*), and in London, 1728, the latter Jas. Gardiner's "Englished Version," ed. 3. In the same year appeared also John Lawrence's *Paradise Regained: or the Art of Gardening*.



Mrs. Cecil<sup>14</sup> notes in her bibliography a *Carmen de Cultu Hortorum* by Richard Richardson, published in London in 1669, but I know nothing further of either the writer or the poem. The first original eighteenth-century didactic on gardens written in English is, as far as I have been able to learn, the rare and curious work of John Lawrence, *Paradise Regained: or the Art of Gardening*.<sup>15</sup> To one uninterested in the georgic, this work, whose title promises so much, is a "dreary poem, so-called, of fifty-nine pages." A plague, it seems, is raging in town, so that the poet leaves,

And now retir'd to Streams and Sylvan glades,  
With other fine Poetical Parades,  
To stations near, where Cowley tuned his Lyre,  
To Hills, exalted more by Denham's Fire,  
In Muse's Seats affect the Muses style,  
And Fancy feels a Heat more Juvenile.  
Often, amus'd with Feats in Gardening,  
Delightful Exercise, I work and Sing.

These feats are then described, after which it appears that "at one view" there may be seen the Myrtle, Citron and other tropical trees.

Then food plants are described, the author exclaiming,

Assist me, therefore, Goddess, to express  
Such things as these if harsh, with easiness.

Such things as "these" being cabbages, asparagus, artichoke, beans, etc.<sup>16</sup>

A passage on medicinal herbs follows, possibly inspired by Rapin.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 344. See above, p. 53.

<sup>15</sup> For my knowledge of the contents of the rare and valuable edition of 1728, I am indebted to my friend Mr. Hyder E. Rollins, who kindly read it for me at Harvard.

<sup>16</sup> One wonders whether it was from his knowledge of the georgic, or from his ignorance of it, that Dr. Johnson made his caustic comment on the theme of Grainger's didactic: "What could he make of a sugar cane? One might as well write, The Parsley-bed, a Poem, or The Cabbage-garden, a Poem." Cf. *Life* by Boswell, ed. Hill, vol. II, p. 520.



Herbs Physical of divers qualities,  
I plant and in good order Methodize,

In short whatever Malady you name  
That Death portends, or tortures human Frame,  
Whether Catarrhs, with constant flux of Rheum,  
Or hectic Heats, that inwardly consume.  
If Dropsy Waters to th' Abdomen flow,  
Or Stone the Back, or Gout torments the Toe,  
Or if by chance, the Veins with Poison swell,  
Here grow those Herbs, that all these griefs repel.

The author describes the mutual confidences established between himself and the Bees, gives an account of the birds that visit his garden, and thus prefaces his conclusion:

And having now described in some degree  
Perhaps with too great Partiality,  
A rural settlement that pleases me;  
To make some Recompense, if I offend,  
Would tack this useful Moral to the End.

A moral which takes up five pages. Could anything be more characteristic of the spirit of the eighteenth century? A bad poet offers to make "Recompense" for his bad poetry by "tacking a useful moral to the end."

Vanière has among his sixteen georgics one on the kitchen garden,<sup>17</sup> five hundred and ninety-four lines, given chiefly to precepts on the subject. Others may sing of gardens redolent with beautiful flowers. He will devote himself to the humbler but more useful products of the Kitchen Garden, once meditated by the divine Maro. He refers to Rapin, who bore away the "first honors of the garden," but he does not mention Alamanni nor Columella. He has a few lines on lilies and roses, which flowers have also their "sober uses," but in the main he fulfills his promise. With the exception of a Cain and Abel story without the tragic ending, and a mythological episode, he devotes himself almost wholly to the culture of vegetables dear to the French.

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.*, IX. *Olus.*

2. William Mason's "*The English Garden*" and Delille's "*Jardins*"

William Mason's poem, *The English Garden*,<sup>18</sup> marks the beginning of a new epoch in the history of didactics on gardening. Mason has nothing to say of cabbages and parsley beds. Like Rapin, he writes for the rich, but he scorns precepts such as Rapin's; for the main object of his poem is to overthrow the rule of the formal garden, to encourage the newly awakened taste for romantic landscape effects. And in his teaching, he introduces another note, new to the didactic; a combination of the principles of painting with poetry, the address to great painters, and the invocation to Painting.<sup>19</sup>

All the familiar features of the georgic are present in *The English Garden*, except the use of proverbial sayings, the description of country pastimes, and the description of weather signs. Mason has also passages in praise of the advantages of simple country life,<sup>20</sup> but the spirit of the poem is not the spirit of Vergil, for Mason glorifies not the power of labor, but the power of taste combined with wealth, and his one picture of cottage life<sup>21</sup> is marked by the well-bred Englishman's patronizing attitude towards the simple rustic; it has the sensible gentleman's point of view, entirely lacking Vergil's deep and understanding sympathy with the Italian peasantry.

The poet declares that he does not court popular applause, but writes to soothe his grief for his wife;<sup>22</sup> however, he admits

<sup>18</sup> "*The English Garden*. A Poem in four books. To which are added a commentary and notes, by W. Burgh. *The Works of Wm. Mason*. In four volumes, London, 1811, Vol. I, p. 202 ff. The first book was written in 1772, the last in 1782. Mason is best known as the friend and biographer of the poet Gray. At Gray's suggestion he undertook to write *The English Garden*. Book IV begins with an elegiac address to Gray.

<sup>19</sup> Cp. Courthope, *Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, Macmillan & Co., London, 1910, vol. VI, p. 29.

<sup>20</sup> *The Eng. Garden*, 459 ff., II, 132-136.

<sup>21</sup> *The Eng. Garden*, II, 406 ff.

<sup>22</sup> *The Eng. Garden*, I, 31 ff. Twentieth century readers may think that Mason was wise not to have counted on popular applause, but Chalmers in his biographical introduction to *The English Garden*, *Eng. Poets*, vol. VIII,



that he cannot plead the ruggedness, nor the unpopularity of his subject, for he writes:

With such a theme I sing  
Secure of candid audience.<sup>23</sup>

In describing fences, however, he makes the characteristic georgic complaint of the difficulty of his task,<sup>24</sup> and in neo-classic fashion attempts to elevate his lowly subject by absurd circumlocutions.<sup>25</sup> Exulting in the proud theme of forests, he suddenly cries:

My weak tongue feels  
Its ineffectual powers, and seeks in vain  
That force of ancient phrase which, speaking, paints,  
And is the thing it sings. Ah, Virgil, why  
By thee neglected was this loveliest theme,

remarks that "altho the usual objections to didactic poetry are undoubtedly against this specimen, yet *The English Garden* was read with avidity and approbation."

<sup>23</sup> *The Eng. Garden*, II, 34-35.

<sup>24</sup> *The Eng. Garden*, II, 250-259.

<sup>25</sup> Cp. H. A. Beers: *A Hist. of Eng. Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century*, N. Y., H. Holt & Co., pp. 123 ff. Professor Beers, who has no patience with didactic poets, writes: "The influence of Thomson's inflated diction is here seen at its worst. The whole poem is an object lesson on the absurdity of didactic poetry. Especially harrowing are the author's struggles to be poetic while describing the various kinds of fences designed to keep sheep out of his inclosures.

Ingrateful sure,  
When such the theme, becomes the poet's task,  
Yet must he try by modulation meet  
Of varied cadence and selected phrase,  
Exact yet free, without inflation bold,  
To dignify that theme.

Accordingly he dignifies his theme by speaking of a net as the 'sportsman's hempen toils,' of a gun as the 'fell tube

Whose iron entrails hide the sulphurous blast,  
Satanic engine.'

An ice-house becomes a conundrum,

a structure rude, where Winter pounds  
In conic pit his congelations hoar,  
That Summer may his tepid beverage cool  
With the chill luxury.



Left to the grating voice of modern reed?  
 Why not array it in the splendid robe  
 Of thy rich diction, and consign the charge  
 To Fame, thy hand-maid, whose immortal plume  
 Had born its praise beyond the bounds of Time.<sup>26</sup>

A lament due not to modesty alone.

As a treatise on the management of landscape effect, *The English Garden* is in general sensible; the poet shows the artist's appreciation for color and distance, and he is alive to the influence of fragrance, as well as of color. As a poem it illustrates many of the worst faults of the age. Yet Nathan Drake<sup>27</sup> pronounces it the most finished and interesting specimen that the English possess in the mode of the georgic,<sup>28</sup> and Courthope, altho he grants Mason's pedantry and want of humor, makes the following comment: "Warton's praise of *The English Garden* as a composition in which 'didactic poetry is brought to perfection by the happy combination of judicious precepts with the most elegant ornaments of language and imagery' is not undeserved."<sup>29</sup> Courthope, unlike Professor Beers, is sometimes generous and always just: the poem is not entirely devoid of poetic beauty, but its main interest is that it begins a new fashion in the georgic, and that, more perhaps than any other georgic, it represents the conflicting ideas of the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The poet invokes Simplicity, declaring that his song "belongs to her"; and he belies his words on almost every page. Simplicity, he announces, is his guiding deity; but it is the "Muse" who teaches how to make paths and to form fences, then "mounts to sing of forests." "Nature" and "Liberty," beloved eighteenth-century words, recur repeatedly; but Nature must be wedded to Art, and Liberty must be restrained. Mason unites the roman-

<sup>26</sup> *The Eng. Garden*, III, 76-85.

<sup>27</sup> *Literary Hours*, London, 1820, Vol. II, pp. 113 ff.

<sup>28</sup> Drake is almost as exaggerated in his praise of the *English Garden* as Ginguéné in praise of *La Collé*. However, an acquaintance with Dr. Drake's sentimental tale of *Maria Arnold* would prepare one for the critic's enthusiastic view.

<sup>29</sup> *Op. cit.*, VI, p. 29.

tic yearning for solitude and dim-lighted glades with the classic hatred of superstition, the romantic love of monastic ruins with the classic scorn of inmates of monasteries. His most romantic passages illustrate the neo-classic delight in moralizing; and his final episode represents chiefly the worst strain of romanticism, the "graveyard school's tendency to revel in the luxury of grief."<sup>30</sup>

The introduction to this episode,

Precepts tire, and this fastidious age  
Rejects the strain didactic, try we then  
In livelier narrative the truths to veil  
We dare not dictate,

reveals the poet's weakness, and is, perhaps, the most ungrateful remark ever made about the eighteenth century, for surely if any age ever suffered in patience "the strain didactic" that age is the eighteenth century.

Mason resigns the "Dorian reed" to youthful bards; he is hopeless of general praise, "well repaid if they of classic ear" accept his song, and may turn the art he sings to soothing use in the ill-omened hour

When Rapine rides  
In titled triumph, when Corruption waves  
Her banner broadly in the face of day.

He ends with a prayer that the "long-lost train of virtues may

<sup>30</sup> Concerning this episode, Mason writes to Walpole, Jan. 21, 1781, *The Correspondence of Horace Walpole and the Rev. W. Mason*, ed. by the Rev. T. Mitford, London, 1851, Vol. II, pp. 135 ff.: "I have much greater hopes of your applause on my fourth book of the *English Garden*, which is now almost finished . . . ; the subject you know is that of Ornamental Buildings, Menageries, Conservatories, etc., and with this I have contrived to interweave a pathetic story throughout, so that the whole book will be (if you can have any idea from the term) an Episodico-didactico-politico-farrago, unlike everything ever was written or will be written. The improvers will like it for its taste, the ladies for its tenderness; opposition for its Americality; yet of this last it has no more than was absolutely necessary for the fable, and that so gently touched, that even Bishops will be forced to applaud it for its humanity, I had almost said Christianity. I wish it was possible to have it published on the Fast morning on this very account."



return to save Albion's throne, her altars, and her laureate bowers."

Younger English bards, Cowper, and William Knight, were to take up the Dorian reed with more or less success, but in the meantime, Delille published his poem *Les Jardins*,<sup>31</sup> which was inspired by the prevailing taste for the newly-imported fashion of the English Garden.

In the preface to the revised edition of 1801, Delille observes that his poem has a great inconvenience, that of being a didactic, a species necessarily a little cold, especially to a nation that, as has often been remarked, can scarcely endure anything but verses composed for the theatres. He refers to Vergil's sketch of gardens, and to Rapin's work, but he does not mention Columella nor Alamanni's book on Gardens. Of Rapin he writes: "Ce que le poète romain regrettoit de ne pouvoir faire le poète Rapin l'a exécuté. Il a écrit dans la langue et quelquefois dans le style de Virgile, un poème en quatre chants, sur les jardins, qui eut un grand succès dans un temps où on lisoit encore les vers latins modernes. Son ouvrage n'est pas sans élégance; mais on y désiroit plus de précision, et des épisodes plus heureux." He criticises the too great regularity of Rapin's plan, and writes of the formal gardens described by the older poet, "Par-tout elle regrette la beauté un peu désordonnée, et la piquante irrégularité de la Nature. . . . Ses jardins sont ceux de l'architecte; les autres sont ceux du philosophe, du peintre et du poète."

Delille disclaims any debt to Mason, stating that *Les Jardins* was composed long before he read *The English Garden*. He makes a defense of the "genre didactique," and of *Les Jardins*, justifying himself against those who accuse him of having written solely for the rich; and he claims finally that twenty editions of the poem, besides numerous translations, answer the severest critics.

<sup>31</sup> Nouvelle ed. Considerablement Augmentée, Paris, 1801. Besides writing *Les Jardins*, Delille translated Vergil's *Georgics*, and wrote *L'Homme des Champs, ou Les Géorgiques Françaises*. See above, p. 45.



Delille's poem, like *The English Garden*, is a georgic characteristic of the eighteenth century.<sup>32</sup> Like *The English Garden* it is a treatise on the best methods of securing landscape effects, and like Mason, Delille decries the old formal methods; but the French poet makes a point of warning against extravagance, and counsels the avoidance of excess.

Mason has an interesting passage on the history of English gardens in which he quotes a description of the Garden of Eden, and names Milton as "great Nature's herald," who yet vainly proclaimed her primeval honors.<sup>33</sup> Delille writes:

Aimez donc des jardins la beauté naturelle,  
Dieu lui-même aux mortels en traça le modèle,

and gives an account of Milton's description of the Garden of Eden.<sup>34</sup>

Mason ends his second book with the episode of the Sidonian Sage<sup>35</sup> who gives up the peace of his retired garden to accept the burden of royalty. Delille ends Chant iv with the same story, introducing another character, the Sage's son.

Like Mason, Delille associates the principles of painting with the principles of poetry, and advises the imitation of great landscape painters. Like Mason, he has the romantic love of ruins, but he does not make Mason's mistake of commending the building of ruins, for he is strongly opposed to anything in the nature of pretense. As in Mason, familiar eighteenth-century phrases occur repeatedly, "imitate Nature," "study variety," "encourage liberty"; and the poet expresses the early

<sup>32</sup> Delille omits the constellation device, and the discussion of weather signs.

<sup>33</sup> *The Eng. Garden*, I, 386 ff.

<sup>34</sup> *Les Jardins*, I, 715 ff. Thomson is frequently called the father of English landscape gardening. Delille observes in a note that many English claim that Milton's description of Paradise, and some passages of Spenser, gave rise to the fashion of landscape gardens; but that the *genre* originated with the Chinese. He prefers, however, the authority of Milton, as more poetic.

<sup>35</sup> Abdalonimus. The fact on which this episode is founded is recorded by Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, Justin and Q. Curtius. See Mason, *op. cit.*, n. xvi, p. 402.

romantic ideas of the importance of the individual, the love of the wild and solitary, the luxury of grief.

Much of Delille's advice is sensible. His style is clear and brilliant, but, altho the gardens of which he sings are designed primarily to appeal to the imagination, his poem makes no imaginative appeal. It can, however, be read with interest, because it mirrors popular fashions, and popular ideas; hence its vogue in the poet's day.

3. *Louis de Fontanes' "Maison Rustique." Its relation to Delille's "Jardins" and the fashion of the English landscape garden.*

Louis de Fontanes' <sup>36</sup> georgic, *La Maison Rustique*, may be regarded in Sainte-Beuve's phrase, as "un sous-amendement respectueux du poème des *Jardins*."

In 1788 de Fontanes published *Le Verger*, with a preface in which he states that Delille, citing Vergil as an example to follow, neglects useful gardens, altho the garden of Vergil is 'un potager.'<sup>37</sup> "Je n'ai sans doute rempli le plan de Virgile," continues de Fontanes, "mais j'ai cherché de le suivre. Au lieu des parcs de Watheley et de le Nôtre, j'ai voulu tracer simplement,

Le jardin du berger, du poète, et du sage."

An interesting criticism of Delille follows: "Ces observations ne tendent point à diminuer l'admiration qu'on doit au grand et rare talent de M. l'abbé Delille. Le défaut principal est bien couvert par la foule de beautés poétiques qu'il a semées dans son ouvrage; les vers français n'ont jamais eu plus d'éclat, plus d'harmonie et de variété dans le rythme. En un mot, puisque le style fait le poète, M. l'Abbé Delille l'est au plus haut degré."

De Fontanes stands declared against the English garden, and against what he considers false attempts to imitate Nature. He

<sup>36</sup> *Œuvres*. Précédées d'une lettre de M. de Chateaubriand. Avec une notice biographique par M. Roger, et une autre par M. Sainte-Beuve. Paris, 1859. *La Maison Rustique*, Vol. I, pp. 187 ff.

<sup>37</sup> Cp. the opening lines of Vanière's *Olus*.



undertakes his task well prepared by the study of many treatises on gardens, among them those of Chambers, Whateley, Morel and Hirschfeld. The last-named, he remarks in the preface to the "Verger," pretends that France has no interesting views; because of this absurd pretense the beauties of French vistas are emphasized.

*La Maison Rustique* is merely "l'ancien Verger refondu." It is written in three books, "Le Potager," "Le Verger" <sup>38</sup> and "Le Parc." De Fontanes makes use of all the georgic devices except proverbial sayings. He advises even the study of favorable and unfavorable days, the learning of the regular signs of the heavens, and the marking of time by the constellations. The horrors of war are dwelt upon, but de Fontanes being optimistic, finds that good comes even from war, and while he remarks on the truth that all things must die, he does not linger on the dreary thought of the quick passing of the best in human life, but emphasizes the idea that all things are reborn and that life continues immortal thru one's descendants: <sup>39</sup>

Ces frères nourrissons entre des mains habiles  
Croissent pour remplacer leurs ancêtres débiles.  
Tout meurt, mais tout renaît; et ce tronc précieux  
Que jadis a planté la main de vos aïeux;  
Et que plus d'une fois en bravant leur défense,  
Dans ses jeux indiscrets outrage à votre enfance,  
Ce tronc, que ses bienfaits ont longtemps embelli,  
Par ses dons épuisé, comme nous a vieilli;  
Il tombe, et cède enfin son empire à l'arbuste.  
Tel, sous le poids des ans penchant sa tête auguste,  
Un vieillard vertueux regrette moins le jour  
S'il laisse après sa mort un fils de son amour,  
Son fils reproduira ses mœurs et son image.<sup>40</sup>

The last book ends with an interesting tribute to "La Muse géorgique," in whose defense the poet tells the story of the contest in which Hesiod is given the palm over Homer.

<sup>38</sup> Pontano's *De Hortis Hesperidum* and John Philips' *Cyder* might be discussed in connection with "Le Verger," but since Philips' work treats of the culture of the apple and Pontano's of the culture of the citron, they do not belong in the history of the didactic on gardens.

<sup>39</sup> Cp. *La Colt.*, I, 340 ff. See above, p. 62.

<sup>40</sup> *La Maison Rust.*, Chant II.



In "Le Potager," de Fontanes makes no reference to the efforts of Columella, Alamanni, Vanière, and John Lawrence. His purpose, apparently, is to rebuke the pride of the Muse of poets like Mason and Delille, for after having sung the charm of the kitchen garden, ornamented without expense, cultivated from seeds, herbs, and roots brought from neighboring gardens, he exclaims,

Longtemps l'orgueil du vers a craint de les nommer,  
Aujourd'hui je les chante et je veux les semer.

He dignifies the theme of humble garden plants with considerable skill, making a pleasant picture of the bees among the thyme:

L'ail s'annonce de loin; pardonne, aimable Horace,  
Thestilis aux bras nus, sans craindre ta menace,  
Exprime en le broyant de piquantes saveurs,  
Pui raniment le goût et la soif des buveurs,  
Et le thym qu'en leur vol les abeilles moissonnent  
Le cresson qui des eaux recherche les courants,  
Et l'ache et le carfeuil aux esprits odorants.

The poet follows his precepts for the sowing of vegetable seeds by a defense of his theme. The potager is less brilliant in effect than the parterre, but it lasts longer. Zephyr loves it; Flora cultivates it: the opening chalices drink the morning dews. The cabbage, whose name causes the Muse to blush, forgets this scorn, and enriches the winter with its tribute always green.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, philosophizing, the poet observes that altho humble products may be despised, they have nevertheless changed the course of destiny.

Souvent un végétal trouvé dans les déserts,  
Un arbuste, un seul fruit, peut changer l'univers.

Triptolemus, sowing grain, brought about civilization; the Gauls were called to the banks of the Tiber by the vine, and so on, with various illustrations to prove his point.

<sup>41</sup> The potato is not named, but is referred to as a vegetable more useful than the cabbage, a product to which much homage is due, since often it makes up for the denial of Ceres.

The potager's possible beauties are not neglected. The poet aims to bring out the point that in the kitchen garden everything is of use for pleasure, for nourishment, or for health. The proud "Mondor," contemptuous of "le potager," rich by "gains honteux," desires the tranquility of country life. He will "make" an English park, with newly-placed ruins, everything showy, expensive, bizarre. Mondor wastes his substance, gets into debt, the bailiff comes, and ruin follows.<sup>42</sup> Sensible afterdwellers sow lettuces on the unhappy site.

In "Le Verger," de Fontanes pays a tribute to Delille's verse, altho he condemns his teachings, vain lectures on "simple négligence," simplicity which is only "un luxe de plus." The gifts of the cherry tree, the briar, etc., declares de Fontanes, are worth more than all useless ornaments of the pompous catalpa, the varnish trees of China transplanted to France at great cost. And in "Le Parc," the poet makes a final plea for the restoration of the formal garden, and the condemned labyrinth.

De Fontanes does not neglect the solidity of his agricultural precepts. His "Orchard," in this respect, might bear comparison with Philips' *Cyder*.<sup>43</sup> The French poet's mind is of a moralizing and scientific trend, and in certain passages he shows a kinship to Erasmus Darwin. The especial interest of his poem is its relation to other garden georgics, and to the eighteenth-century quarrel over regularity and form, opposed to the wild variety of Nature, one of the familiar phases in the early quarrels between classicists and romanticists.

Socially, de Fontanes is not revolutionary in his ideas, altho he makes so strong a protest for simplicity as opposed to the bizarre and the extravagant. He has the aristocrat's contempt for the showy splendors of the new-rich; but inequality, he declares, cannot be banished from the freest state. If fortune

<sup>42</sup> Cp. the stories told of similar visitors said to have haunted Shenstone's Leasowes as a result of that poet's rash expenditure.

<sup>43</sup> The lines on cider and wines, the account of the Scarecrow, suggest the influence of Philips.







But, "it were long, too long," to tell them all.

The learn'd and wise  
Sarcastic would exclaim, and judge the song  
Cold as its theme, and like its theme, the fruit  
Of too much labor, worthless when produced.<sup>45</sup>

Not having Mason's scorn of foreign plants, Cowper gives an account of the green-house, and of the exotic blooms that flourish there while the wind whistles outside; and he has some precepts on the proper arrangement of flowers, practical to some extent, but of no help to a novice at gardening.

The rest of the poem is a discourse against the foolish and wicked luxuries of the day. In satirizing the follies of the new fashion of landscape gardening, the poet makes an attack on the landscape methods of the famous Brown; methods that require a fortune for the following. The joy of the "enraptured owner" of the new English garden is pictured ending in bankruptcy. But the estate, unlike that of de Fontane's proud Mondor, is not to be sown with lettuces. The owner

Drained to the last poor item of his wealth  
... sighs, departs, and leaves the accomplished plan  
.....  
Just when it meets his hopes, and proves the Heaven  
He wanted, for a wealthier to enjoy.<sup>46</sup>

The methods of Brown are attacked at much greater length in a didactic entitled *The Landscape*, written in 1794 by William Payne Knight.<sup>47</sup> Knight, however, appears to have been concerned not with the ruin of the owner of the estate, but with the ruin of the estate.

The author's advertisement to the second edition of his poem suggests that he has passed thru troubled times since its first appearance.<sup>48</sup> With some warmth against his assailants he

<sup>45</sup> *The Task*, Bk. III, 562.

<sup>46</sup> *The Task*, III, 784 ff.

<sup>47</sup> In 3 bks. 2nd ed. London, 1795.

<sup>48</sup> For a venomous spurt against Knight see Horace Walpole's letters to Mason, March 22, 1796, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 369.

defends himself, stating that he is concerned merely to ascertain and to extend good taste. "As to what has been asserted of his preferring the opposite extremes of a Siberian desert and a Dutchman's garden to the grounds of Blenheim and Stowe and Burleigh," he declares, "it is a misrepresentation so monstrous as to need no reply." One insinuation, however, cannot pass unnoticed. Mr. Mason's *English Garden* is said to have been pillaged to decorate the *Landscape*, without any acknowledgment having been made for the flowers stolen; "but the author of the latter has not read the former, nor did he at the time of writing recollect its existence, tho he now remembers to have heard it spoken of some years before with that commendation which is due to every product of the chaste and classical Mr. Mason; but the candid reader must not think that he makes this confession thru any affected or fastidious refinement; on the contrary, he considers it as an instance of culpable negligence, showing that he has devoted himself to the ancients to the exclusion of the moderns."

He scornfully comments on a sort of doggerel ode, "The Sketch from the Landscape," written in ridicule of his poem. He notices this doggerel only to assure the author that his apprehensions of giving any serious offense in such a performance are wholly groundless, and he scornfully quotes a specimen of his adversary's wit, after which he remarks naïvely that he thinks it may be allowable, without incurring the imputation of arrogance or vanity, to add a specimen in a very different style of a friend's panegyric, which, as it contains not only an approbation, but a very happy illustration of the system of improvements here recommended, may be considered a part of the present work, the whole of which, he modestly adds, the reader will probably wish, had been executed by the same masterly hand.<sup>49</sup>

Mr. Knight's poem, read as a poem, is very dull. In the

<sup>49</sup> The panegyric, by Edward Winnington is duly flattering, sounding enthusiastically the favorite eighteenth century notes, Liberty and Nature, "kindred powers."



history of the georgic it is of some interest. It is clearly an imitation of Vergil, altho neither in spirit nor in form is it truly georgic. Altho the poet claims to have neglected the moderns for the ancients, his verse shows the influence of Pope and Thomson.

*The Landscape* is written in closed couplets that treat rather of aesthetic than of practical ideas. The poet bids you follow Nature and avoid deformity. A passionate outburst protests against the

Pedant jargon that defines  
Beauty's unbounded forms to given lines,

and against the man "who dares not judge without consulting rules."

Like Mason and Delille, Knight alludes to famous painters as guides in the treatment of landscape, and, like Mason, pays tribute to the power of Art. Mason advises the use of every means by which to break the effect of straight lines, and he advises the cultivation of the natural curve; Knight objects to the over use of the "pointed line," but still more to

The path that moves by even serpentine,

and he attacks Brown, who

First taught the walk in even spires to move,  
And from their haunts the secret Dryads drove.

Thinking of Vergil's lines,

rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes,  
flumina amem silvasque inglorius.<sup>20</sup>

the poet cries,

Hence, proud ambition's vain delusive joys!  
Hence, worldly wisdom's solemn empty toys!  
Let others seek the senate's loud applause,  
And glorious, triumph in their country's cause!  
Let others, bravely prodigal of breath  
Go grasp at honor in the jaws of death:  
Their toils may everlasting glories crown,

---

<sup>20</sup> *Georg.* II, 485-6.



And Heaven record their virtues with its own!  
 Let me, retired from business, toil and strife,  
 Close amidst books and solitude my life.<sup>51</sup>

Curious lines, imitating Vergil's words, Vergil's idea of vain ambitions and delusive joys,<sup>52</sup> yet omitting the heart of Vergil's teaching, since the poet will flee not only from ambition but also from toil.

A passage follows depicting the poet's romantic delight in nature; shaded caverns, thickening glooms, sunset and the nightingale's song. He hits at the pastoral poet's strains,

Where lovesick shepherds, sillier than their sheep,  
 In lovesick numbers, full as silly, weep;

inveighs against a monkish life, and concludes his first book with a passage on the value of reason.

The second book gives advice for the securing of landscape effects of light and shade. He warns against formal traces of art, the affectation of Chinese customs, and the imitation of ruins. He laments the passing of old days,

When art to Nature true,  
 No tricks of dress, or whims of fashion knew,

when good taste was found among the lowest, as among the highest. He moralizes in phrases reminiscent of Lucretius on the vain pomp of wealth, but is thankful for the consoling powers of art to raise man in his own estimation, and concludes with a georgic passage on the little annoyances of life, and

all the little ills that rise  
 From idleness, which its own languor flies.

The third book treats of the proper sites for trees and flowers. The poet rails against "the shrubberies' insipid green" and other barbarisms of modern taste; contrasts British woods with foreign growths, and enumerates Britain's blessings.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>51</sup> *The Landscape*, Bk. I, 309 ff.

<sup>52</sup> *Georg.* II, 495 ff.

<sup>53</sup> The following highly poetical lines show a few of the ills from which the Briton is free:

The theme of foreign contrast is developed with generous recognition of the fact that altho Britain is so far superior to other countries, each has some good, since

No state or clime's so bad but that the mind  
Formed to enjoy content, content will find.

Moralizing on how few have power to enjoy the blessings of freedom, the poet draws a picture of revolutionary France, sympathizing with the sufferings of the king and queen. But, like de Fontanes, he concludes optimistically with a hope that from these horrors future times may see

Just order spring and genuine liberty.  
.  
May hence ambition's wasteful folly cease,  
And cultivate the happy arts of peace.

The conflict between the ideas of the classicists and the early romanticists can be seen in Knight, as in Mason, and *The Landscape* is of value because it is so essentially a part of its age.

The history of garden didactics is in some respects the most interesting chapter in a study of the georgic, particularly of the eighteenth-century georgic. The intercrossing of ideas, the play of criticism, the presentation of popular fashions, make these poems an important group when studied in relation to one another.

But from Columella to Knight,<sup>54</sup> not one poet in the group has fulfilled the promise of his subject. The garden is an alluring theme. English poets from Chaucer onward, have loved to dwell upon it, and even before Chaucer the writer of the *Phœnix* broke away from the Anglo-Saxon traditions of

No poisonous reptiles o'er his pillow creep,  
Nor buzzing insects interrupt his sleep.  
Secure at noon he snores beneath the brake.

—*The Landscape*, III, 265-267.

<sup>54</sup> Mrs. Cecil, in her bibliography, *op. cit.*, p. 370, cites a poem called *The Plants*, by Wm. Tighe, Cantos 3 and 4: *The Vine and the Palm*, London, 1811. Cantos 1 and 2 were published earlier and not reprinted. Whether or not, this work is a didactic on the garden, I can not say.

battle and gloom to sing of a land of perpetual fruit and flowers. Bacon is more delightfully human in his *Essay on Gardens* than in anything he ever wrote, and some of the loveliest lines in English poetry are of gardens and of flowers. But in all the georgics on Gardens, there is not a passage that appeals irresistibly to the imagination or that lingers hauntingly in the memory. The way of the didactic poet is hard, but it is not impossible. The reading of every Vergilian imitation on gardens only serves to deepen the regret that Vergil neglected this "loveliest of themes."

---



## CHAPTER VI

## DIDACTIC POEMS ON FIELD SPORTS

Suggesting profitable occupations for the husbandman in winter weather, Vergil writes,

tum gruibus pedicas et retia ponere cervis,  
auritosque sequi lepores; tum figere dammas  
stuppea torquentem Balearis verbera fundae,  
cum nix alta iacet, glaciem cum flumina trudunt; <sup>1</sup>

he imagines the joyous clamour of the hunters, and the hounds, and the echoing groves,

vocat ingenti clamore Cithaeron  
Taÿgetique canes domitrixque Epidauros equorum  
et vox adsensu nemorum ingeminata remugit; <sup>2</sup>

and remembering the practical value of the dog, he advises the husbandman,

nec tibi cura canum fuerit postrema, sed una  
veloces Spartae catulos acremque Molossum  
pasce sero pingui. numquam custodibus illis  
nocturnum stabulis furem incursusque luporum  
aut inpacatos a tergo horrebis Hiberos.  
saepe etiam cursu timidos agitabis onagros,  
et canibus leporem, canibus venabere dammas;  
saepe volutabris pulsos silvestribus apros  
latratu turbabis agens montesque per altos  
ingentem clamore premes ad retia cervum. <sup>3</sup>

It has been remarked that among the developments of the pastoral there is found a "venatory" variety of the eclogue in which hunters speak instead of shepherds.<sup>4</sup> In the *Georgics* Vergil himself has left in embryo the didactic on Rural Sports. The context of the first passage cited, remarks Page,<sup>5</sup> shows that the poet had in mind the needs of the winter larder; and

<sup>1</sup> *Georg.* I, 307-310.

<sup>3</sup> *Georg.* III, 404-414.

<sup>2</sup> *Georg.* III, 43-45.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 40.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 221.

Sallust classes hunting and fishing among servile agricultural employments.<sup>6</sup> In Thomson's *Seasons*, and in other imitations of the *Georgics*, accounts of hunting are given as illustrations of country pastimes; and in general, poetical treatises on hunting and on fishing represent these occupations as the diversions of the wealthy, not as a means of gaining a livelihood, or of filling the larder. In these treatises, however, the plan of the *Georgics* is almost always followed to a certain extent; and if the teaching of the necessity of constant labor is not enforced in the didactic poem on field sports, at least the praises of country life are not neglected.

Poems on field sports may be divided into two large general classes:

- I. *Of Hunting*, represented by the cynegetics<sup>7</sup> and the ixeutics<sup>8</sup> of the ancients, which treat, at least in part, of hunting with dogs, and of snaring birds.
- II. *Of Fishing*, the halieutic<sup>9</sup> of the ancients.

The cynegetic, the ixeutic, and the halieutic are all illustrated in the works ascribed to Oppian of Cilicia; and in two of these poems, the *Cynegetica* and the *Halieutica*, there are found comparisons of the three modes of the chase, the terrestrial, the aerial, and the marine.

## I. OF HUNTING

### 1. *Gratius, Oppian, and Nemesianus*

Gratius Faliscus,<sup>10</sup> Vergil's contemporary, is, as far as I know, the first poet who attempted to develop the Mantuan's suggestions for a treatise on the Chase. Of his *Carmen Venati-*

<sup>6</sup> See W. Drummond's essay on "The Life and Writings of Oppian," pp. 19-20. *The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. XIII.

<sup>7</sup> κυνηγετικός, pertaining to the chase; κύων, dog, ἡγέτης, leader.

<sup>8</sup> ἰξός, bird lime, ἰξευτής, a fowler, bird-catcher.

<sup>9</sup> ἁλιευτικός, a fisher.

<sup>10</sup> Cp. above, p. 40.



*cum*<sup>11</sup> only five hundred and thirty-six intelligible lines have been preserved.<sup>12</sup>

Ovid names Grätius with Vergil,

Tityrus antiquas et erat qui pasceret herbas;  
Aptaque venanti Grätius arma daret;<sup>13</sup>

but in the common judgment of able critics, the latter poet is very far removed in genius and in style from his great contemporary.

Like Vergil, Grätius begins his poem by formally announcing the subject, and continues immediately with the stock invocation, addressing Diana, goddess of hunting. The first one hundred and fifty lines of the poem treat chiefly of the various modes of the chase; but the subject is relieved by brief digressions, as, for example, an account of the dangers of the woods before the arts of hunting were discovered. Very appropriately, the poet introduces an allusion to the grief of Venus over the wounded Adonis; in an account of the best flax (*linum*) to be used in making twine for nets, the poet introduces references to the products of foreign lands; in a discussion on hunting with nets, he eulogizes the old Arcadius, supposed to have invented this mode of capturing animals. A passage on the wood best for spears suggests the following lines from the second *Georgic* (447-448),

at myrtus validis hastilibus et bona bello  
cornus; Ituraeos taxi torquentur in arcus.

In the manner of Vergil on cattle, Grätius treats of dogs. Various lands are mentioned famed for breeds of dogs; dogs best adapted for the chase are discussed in detail, their appearance, their diseases and the cures of their diseases. A digression is introduced on the evils of luxury, one of the few passages

<sup>11</sup> Ed. by R. Stern, Halle, Saxony, 1832.

<sup>12</sup> In an eleventh c. Vienna ms., fragments of five lines follow l. 536, but they are not enough to complete the poem. See Teuffel, *Hist. of Rom. Lit.*, tr. by W. Wagner, London, 1873, Vol. I, p. 487.

<sup>13</sup> *Æs Ponto*, IV, 16, 33-34.



in which, according to Teuffel's<sup>14</sup> judgment, the author rises somewhat higher than his usual dry and heavy style. Grätius describes the effect of luxury on both man and beast, enforcing his morals, in georgic fashion, by allusions to famous historical examples of the degeneracy and downfall resulting from luxury. Greece, says the poet, madly followed foreign guilt:

At qualis nostris, quam simplex mensa Camillis!  
 Qui tibi cultus erat post tot, Serrane, triumphos?  
 Ergo illi ex habitu virtutisque indole priscæ  
 Imposuere orbi Romam caput: actaque ab illis  
 Ad coelum virtus summosque tetendit honores.<sup>15</sup>

The passage suggests a continuation of the second *Georgic*, lines 532-535.

In another digression, lines 430-466, Grätius describes a lake of living oil, where marvellous cures are wrought on diseased cattle, and the topic of the diseases of dogs is again discussed. Then, in the Vergilian spirit, the poet dwells upon the necessity of asking aid from Olympus, and describes Diana's festival.<sup>16</sup>

Various breeds of horses are discussed, and lands are named famous for the noblest steeds. The lines,

O quantum Italiae, sic dii voluere, parentes  
 Praestant, et terras omni praecepimus usu;  
 Nostraque non segnis illustrat prata iuventus.

may have been meant to lead to a panegyric on Italy. But here the manuscript really ends, the few remaining fragmentary lines being hardly legible. The reader who wishes further versified information on the arts of the chase must satisfy himself in the pages of later poets.

In the second century, A. D., Oppian of Cilicia flourished. Controversies have been waged concerning his authorship of the *Cynegetica* so frequently ascribed to him;<sup>17</sup> but an article in

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 487.

<sup>15</sup> *Carmen Venaticum*, ll. 321-325.

<sup>16</sup> Cp. *Georg.* I, 338-350, of Ceres' festival—the Ambarvalia.

<sup>17</sup> For an interesting discussion on this question see in the section on "Polite Literature" in the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol.

the *Encyclopædia Britannica* states that Oppian of Apamea (or Pella) in Syria, is the author of the *Cynegetica*. The poem, adds the writer, is dedicated to the Emperor Caracalla, so that it must have been written after 211. The author evidently knew the *Halieutica*, and perhaps intended to write his poem as a supplement to the earlier work; but in style and poetical merit it is far inferior to the production of the first Oppian, and less correct in versification.

Translations of the Greek *Cynegetica* may be had in Latin, French, Italian, and English,<sup>18</sup> all, except the Latin, products of the eighteenth century. Only four books of the poem have survived. There were originally five, says Dr. Drummond,<sup>19</sup> from whose analysis I give the following summary: The poet begins the first book with a complimentary address to Antoninus, and eulogizes the emperor's mother, Julia Domna. He declares himself invited by Calliope and Diana to undertake the subject of the chase.<sup>20</sup> He hears the goddess' voice exhorting him to arise and accompany her through a region of song where "no poet ever trod before." She does not wish to hear of Bacchus, nor of war, but desires him to sing of dogs and horses, the stratagems and profits of the chase, the loves, the antipathies, and the births of wild beasts. With true georgic pride, the poet

XIII, "An Essay on the Life and Writings of Oppian," by Wm. Drummond, pp. 27 ff. The German editor of Oppian, Schneider, thinks that the *Cynegetics* and the *Halieutics* were written by different authors. Belin de Belu or Ballu, who edited the *Cynegetics*, 1786, and made a translation of them, tried, but not very convincingly, to defend Oppian's authorship of both. Some critics think Oppian a general name for any writer on Marine subjects, and support their claim by etymology.

<sup>18</sup> Didot, A. F., *Poëtes Bucolici et Didactici*. Paris, 1862; Belin de Ballu, 1786; Anton Maria Salvini, 1728; John Mawer, 1736, "The First Bk. of Oppian's *Cynegetics* tr. into Eng. verse with a dissertation and Oppian's life prefixed." Dedicated to Sir Robert Walpole. The latest edition of the *Cynegetica* seems to be that of Pierre Boudreaux. *Oppien d'Apamée: La Chasse*, Paris, 1908.

<sup>19</sup> "Analysis of the *Cynegetica* of Oppian." *Transactions of the Royal Irish Acad.*, vol. XIII, Section on "Polite Literature," pp. 47 ff.

<sup>20</sup> In the pastoral manner Oppian here introduces dialogue between himself and the goddess.



plumes himself upon the originality of his subject, either ignorant or forgetful of the fact that Grattius Faliscus trod at least the beginnings of these paths two hundred years before.

After his declaration of originality, the poet supplicates aid of the all-powerful ruler, and begins his theme. He names three modes of the chase, the aerial, the terrestrial, and the marine, declaring the terrestrial the more dangerous.<sup>21</sup> The poet enumerates the personal qualifications of the hunter, and gives an account of his armor. A passage follows on the varying seasons best adapted to hunting; then there are some lines on the arms and apparatus of the chase. After this, the reader is given some practical information about horses, their breeding, and their color, and the ideal horse is described, as in Vergil. To adorn the theme, mythological references are introduced, and the poet digresses to tell the story of a king whose horses were all destroyed by plague.

The conclusion treats of the difference in breeds of dogs, with particular respect to their training for the chase.

The second book begins with an account of the origin of hunting. A eulogy on hunting follows:

Such strenuous chiefs of old, the race pursued,  
Whom numbers followed, by its love subdued;  
For who but once the glorious sport has tried,  
In chains unbroken is forever tied.  
How sweet the hunter's sleep on vernal flowers!  
How cool his rest in Summer's sunless bowers!  
How joyed, 'mid rocks, the short repast he shares,  
Or plucks the fruit mellifluous Autumn bears!  
His thirst in streamlets from the cave he cools,  
Or bathes his wearied limbs in standing pools.  
And in the woods the Shepherds' offering hails,  
Their loaded baskets and their flowing pails,

an idyllic passage in the spirit of Vergil's eulogy of country life.

An account, reminiscent of Vergil, is given of the jealousies and battles of bulls; then bulls characteristic of different coun-

<sup>21</sup> Oppian of Cilicia declares in the *Halicutica* that sea fishing is more dangerous and more difficult than hunting on land.



tries are described. Some verses follow that treat of various animals; and the poet tells of the animosities and affections existing between animals. A rather amusing passage describes the subus, a creature with two horns on his broad, red forehead. When he swims through the sea, the fishes delight to accompany him. He devours them, but their devotion continues uncooled.

The foregoing passage leads to an address to "improbis Amor":

O Love, dread power, invincible, divine,  
 What wondrous art, what matchless might is thine!  
 The firm-set earth beneath thy arrows reels,  
 And fixed is ocean when their power he feels.  
 When high from earth thou speedst thy heavenward flight,  
 Olympus trembles. E'en in realms of night,  
 Tormented shades, in anguish as they groan,  
 With shivering horror thy dread presence own,  
 And though the sweets of Lethe's stream they prove,  
 Ne'er drink oblivion to the power of love.  
 In strength resistless spreads thy awful sway,  
 Beyond where ever shot the solar ray.  
 In vain with thine his arms would Phoebus wield,  
 E'en Jove's winged lightnings to thy terrors yield.  
 Such, dreadful god, thy shafts of keen desire,  
 Heart-wounding, cureless, dipt in plague of fire,  
 To lawless loves they savage beasts impel,  
 And against Nature drive them to rebel.

After this apostrophe, the poet proceeds to describe the Oryx, the Elephant (which is called a horned beast), and the Rhinoceros. "As to the smaller animals, his muse cannot condescend to sing of them."<sup>22</sup> However, she does condescend to sing of the dormouse and of its winter sleep, and to name several others, among them the blind mole, the story of whose origin is narrated.

In the third book, the poet announces that having sung of the horn-bearing graminivorous tribe, he will now sing of carnivorous animals. He seeks to enliven his instructions by various tales of the lion, the lynx, and so forth. The muse is then

<sup>22</sup> Cp. Somerville, "Of lesser ills the Muse declines to sing, Nor stoops, so low."—*The Chase*.

invoked to sing of animals of a mixed nature, and the book concludes with an account of the camelopard, the ostrich, and the hare.

In the fourth book, Oppian writes more in the manner of the georgic. He proposes to sing of the arts employed by hunters against their prey. These arts, he declares, are so numerous that no mortal can name them; they are known to the gods alone. He will sing of those which he has learned by experience or by hearsay. He then gives an account of the arms with which Nature has supplied wild beasts, and of their use of these arms. The common modes of hunting are discussed, and advice is given to the hunter. Various methods of trapping wild beasts are described, customs peculiar, for example, to the Ethiopians and to the dwellers on the banks of the Tigris. After an account of the metamorphosis of the Bacchantes into panthers, the book closes with a passage on the difficulties in the pursuit of the fox.

Even in reading the analysis of the poem the influence of Vergil can be seen. But the poem lacks the symmetrical plan of the *Georgics*, and like the Oppian of the *Halieutica*, the Oppian of the *Cynegetica* seems more interested in natural history than in rules of practice concerning the arts of hunting. He was evidently influenced by his namesake, although he does not equal the earlier poet's skill in verse. No one has ever claimed that the *Cynegetica* of Oppian is a great poem; but read as an illustration of the developments in the georgic type it may be pronounced an interesting and valuable work.

The next didactic on hunting of which I have any knowledge is the unfinished *Cynegetica* of Nemesianus.<sup>23</sup> A. J. Valpy<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Ed. Stern, 1832. Little seems known of Marcus Aurelius Olympius Nemesianus, except that he lived at the end of the third century A. D., in the reign of the Emperor Carus and his sons. Tiraboschi, *op. cit.*, T. II, 441 ff., notes that two lost poems, *Halieutica* and *Nautica*, have been ascribed to him. Teuffel, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 308, says that two fragments of a poem on the trapping of birds, and some well-done hexameters of the *Pontica* of an unknown author, have been attributed to Nemesianus.

<sup>24</sup> *The Classical Journal*, XXXI, p. 253 ("On the Poems of Calphurnius and Nemesian").



describes this fragment as "a mere dry recital of particulars unenlivened by the intervention of episode or moral sentiment, clothed indeed in language sufficiently elaborate, but far inferior in vigor and poetical expression to the fragment of Gratius on the same subject, which it otherwise resembles." The poem is valuable, however, the writer adds, for such information as it contains on the subject of which it treats. The generous-minded Ginguéné observes that Nemesianus conserved something of the genius and good taste of the *bons siècles*. It is certainly only fair to say that considering the poet's choice of subject his poem might be worse.

Like Gratius, Nemesianus begins by announcing his theme, "the labors and the joyous arts of hunting." Like Oppian of Apamea he evidently remembers the opening passage of the third *Georgic*. Perhaps his remembrance is partly due to Oppian of Apamea. Other subjects, he announces, have been sung by greater poets; he has been inspired to sing the open fields, to go forth amid green grass, to tread upon moss yet untouched. He enumerates a long list of subjects now grown commonplace; and he promises to the sons of Carus a poem upon their deeds.<sup>25</sup> Not until line 102 does he begin to discourse on his theme, which he introduces by the following passage, due evidently to familiarity with Vergil's *Georgics*:

Duc age, Diva, tuum frondosa per avia vatem;  
Te sequimur: tu pande domus et lustra ferarum.  
Huc igitur mecum, quisquis percussus amore  
Venandi, damnas lites avidosque tumultus  
Civilesque fugis strepitus bellique fragores,  
Nec praedas avidus sectaris gurgite ponti.<sup>26</sup>

Dogs are then treated; their training, their needs, the counsels from which they come, their great sagacity, etc. Then in the same manner the poet writes of horses, and of the varied elements of hunting. Here the poem abruptly ends. It was printed for the first time in 1534;<sup>27</sup> but it had received due

<sup>25</sup> p. *Georg.* III, 10-48.

<sup>26</sup> Ll. 97-102.

<sup>27</sup> at Venice, in a volume containing also the didactic of Gratius on the chase, Ovid's *Halieutica*, and a short poem on the chase by Cardinal Richelieu, cp. Stern, *op. cit.*, p. ix.



honor long before the sixteenth century, for in the time of Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims it was used as a text-book in the schools.<sup>28</sup>

## 2. *Medieval Poems on the Chase*

Drummond<sup>29</sup> suggests that in the time of Oppian, field sports as a subject for poetry may have been in as great favor as fieldwork in the time of Vergil. However, except the poem of Nemesianus, nothing in the way of a didactic on the chase seems to have survived from the time of Oppian of Apamea until the thirteenth century. In the Middle Ages, the stream of pastoral productions was "reduced to the merest trickle."<sup>30</sup> From the third to the thirteenth century, the stream of georgic production seems to have entirely disappeared. The few products of the later Middle Ages are mainly didactics on the chase, poems so obscure that in general, as far as the reading world is concerned, they are quite unknown. Yet the history of these poems is far from uninteresting, for they illustrate a striking phase of medieval life.

In the thirteenth century, I have found no didactics in English or Italian, celebrating the arts of hunting. But in France the theme of the chase was not neglected. At this time, love of the chase was a general passion among the higher classes of the French; feudal barons and princes of the Church were equally skilled in the arts of hunting.<sup>31</sup> Aubertin<sup>32</sup> names as the first metrical product on the subject, a didactic written before 1230 by a Provençal troubadour, the canon Deudes de Prades,<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Cp. Teuffel, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>30</sup> Cp. Greg, *op. cit.*, p. 18. See above, p. 27.

<sup>31</sup> Cp. Jullien, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.*, T. II, p. 64.

<sup>33</sup> Deudes or Daude de Prades died before 1230. He wrote another didactic poem on the four cardinal sins. A. Jeanroy, in the *Grande Encycl.*, Vol. XXVII, p. 531, states that E. Monaci, *Studi di filologia romanza*, XII, gives the complete text of the *Auzels Cassadors*. For further literature on the subject see Koch, *Beiträge zur Textkritik der Auzels Cassadors*, Münster, 1897.

*Dels Auzels Cassadors*, thirty-six hundred octosyllabics in honor of birds of the chase. To the same period belongs an anonymous *Chace dou Cerf*, which Jullien<sup>34</sup> pronounces the first French didactic on the art of venery. Aubertin<sup>35</sup> remarks of this poem that it is written in octosyllabics, and that it is long and full of technical details. Jullien<sup>36</sup> supplies the added information that the author must have been a man of profound learning as well as a skilled hunter. "Son style," adds the historian, "atteste la connaissance la plus parfaite des poètes latins, et les amateurs de la chasse à course, 'ce déduit qui les autres passe,' ne sauraient encore dédaigner aujourd'hui les préceptes qu'il a pris soin de formuler."<sup>37</sup>

In the fourteenth century there appear to have been neither English nor Italian didactics on the chase.<sup>38</sup> French poets, however, seem to have been bolder than the English and the Italians, probably because love of the chase was no less a passion in France in the fourteenth than in the thirteenth century. King John set the fashion for his followers, and it was at the king's command that the royal chaplain, Gace, or Gaces de la Bigne,<sup>39</sup> wrote his cynegetic, *Les Déduits de la Chasse*, or *Le Roman des Déduits*,<sup>40</sup> a paraphrase of an older *Livre du Roy Modus et de la Reine Ratio*. The writer uses the dramatic method of the eclogue to expound the arts of hunting with dogs and with birds. The two arts are represented by *Amour-des-Chiens* and *Amour-d'Oiseaux*, who expound by turns in order

<sup>34</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>35</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>36</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>37</sup> Aubertin, *op. cit.*, p. 65, names still a third poem on the chase, that is found in the thirteenth century, an unedited work called *Dit le la Cace dou Cerf*, or *le Cerf Amoureux*. It is an allegory described by the critic as obscure and heavy. The lover is the hunter, the lady the stag. The poem probably bears somewhat the same relation to the didactic on field sport that Tansillo's *Vendemmiatore* bears to didactics on field work.

<sup>38</sup> Carducci edited *Cacce in Rima dei Secoli XIV e XV*, Bologna, 1896, a collection of poems lyrical and idyllic in character, not didactic.

<sup>39</sup> 1310-1380. The poet accompanied King John in his captivity in England, where *Le Roman de Déduits* was begun. Cp. *La Grande Encycl.*, T. 6, p. 803.

<sup>40</sup> Cp. Jullien, *Op. cit.*, p. 111.



that the king may judge which has the better right to the title of "déduit," "c'est à dire de plaiser, de divertissement par excellence." The king gratifies both with the title claimed. "L'oeuvre de Gace de la Bigne," says Jullien, "est dépourvue de génie et d'agrément: cependant, elle contient quelques détails intéressants." Not the least interesting point about this medieval cynegetic is the fact that it illustrates the hold of the chase upon the higher clergy.<sup>41</sup> Gace de la Bigne closes his work with the lines

..... Ceulx qui l'orront lire  
Que de leur grace ils veuillent dire  
Que Dieu lui pardoint ses deffaulx  
Car moult aima chiens et oiseaulx.<sup>42</sup>

About 1394, Hardouin, Seigneur de Fontaine-Guerin,<sup>43</sup> wrote *Le Tresor de Venerie*, 1284 verses in octosyllabics imitating a prose treatise, *les Déduits de la Chasse*, by Gaston Phebus de Foix.<sup>44</sup> Hardouin's effort seems not to have been very successful. Sometimes, says Jullien, the poem is hardly intelligible. However, altho the poet may have lacked skill and clarity, he did not fail in enthusiasm for the "noble art." In the following lines he voices the sentiment of his age:

Tous nobles doyvent estre duit  
D'amer et suir le deduit  
De chiens, de chasse et le mestier:  
Si comme à Roys, à Ducs, à Contes  
Et à Princes dont les bons contes  
Sont rementeus et retrais.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Jullien, *op. cit.*, p. 112, names another ecclesiastic who, before Gace, celebrated in his verses the noble labors of the hunter, Philippe de Vietri, Bishop of Meaux, the author of another *Roman de Déduits*. I have been unable to identify Philippe de Vietri, or to learn anything concerning the nature of his verses.

<sup>42</sup> Cp. Jullien, *op. cit.*, 112.

<sup>43</sup> Jullien, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-119. Aubertin, *op. cit.*, pp. 64, 65.

<sup>44</sup> Gaston Phebus is said to have owned 1600 dogs. His book, says Jullien, is a treatise *ex professo* on dogs, nooses, bayonets, and all the other fourteenth-century methods of taking game.

<sup>45</sup> Cp. Jullien, *op. cit.*, p. 119.



In the fifteenth century there is found almost nothing in the nature of the georgic. The theme of the chase was not entirely abandoned, but in Italy the poets seem to have had no interest in didactics on hunting,<sup>46</sup> and in France there appears to have been little inspiration or encouragement to write of the chase. Louis XI loved this pastime with perhaps even greater passion than his ancestors. So greatly did he love it, indeed, that he could not bear to share his hunting ground. He deprived his nobles of their ancient privileges, refusing to allow them to hunt without his permission. "Le roi de France," writes Jullien,<sup>47</sup> "voulait seul avoir le droit de prendre les animaux sauvages par tout le territoire." The cruelty of his proceedings against those who defied his will was not likely to make the theme of hunting popular in song. It is not surprising to find few cynegetics belonging to this age. I know of only two, the first written at the beginning, the second at the end of the century.

The earlier specimen, a *Fragment of a Poem on Falconry*, is printed by Halliwell-Wright in the *Reliquiae Antiquae*.<sup>48</sup> The first lines are missing; what is left of the poem begins with an account of the dangers incurred in hunting the boar and the stag. The writer evidently thinks the game not worth the candle. He demands,

Est-ce plaisir de se combatre  
Et faire ses membres trencher  
A un serf ou à un senglier?  
Avoir paour, peril et paine?  
N'est-ce mie chose grevaine?  
Certes si est que que nul die;  
Mais s'il est qui le contredie,  
Que les maulx ne faille endurer  
Que cy m'aves oui nommer,  
A ceulx qui deduit de chienz aiment,  
Et qui maistre et seigneur se claiment;

<sup>46</sup> Lorenzo de' Medici's much-praised *Caccia col Falcone* is not didactic. Greg, *op. cit.*, p. 37-38, places it in "the outlying realms of pastoral." Rossi, *Il '400*, p. 241-242, names a poem on the chase not cited by Carducci, an anonymous *Caccia di Belfiore*. There is also a *Caccia d'amore* by Berni, which has nothing either of the pastoral or of the georgic.

<sup>47</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>48</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 310.

Je sui prest de le mettre por voir:  
 Mais il est trop bon assavoir,  
 Que deduit d'oiseaulx, monseigneur,  
 Est sans mal en boutte greigneur:  
 Car donne profit et plaisance  
 Et bien honneste sans grevance.<sup>49</sup>

The writer treats "tout premièrement" of falcons; and in the georgic manner describes the ideal falcon. He continues with a picture of the King of France setting out for the hunt with his attendants, and introduces the narrative and conversational style of Lorenzo in *La Caccia col Falcone*. In the middle of this episode the fragment breaks off abruptly.

At the end of the century, in the reign of Charles VIII, Jacques de Brézé wrote a *Livre de Chasse*,<sup>50</sup> which Jullien describes as the charming recital of a stag-hunt in which Anne de Beaujeu distinguished herself by her "intrépidité ainsi que par ses connaissances cynégétiques." The poem appears to be georgic insofar as it is said to be filled with details of great interest to lovers of the chase.

To the fifteenth century belongs the only versified treatise on hunting that I have found in English literature previous to the eighteenth century. It is contained in the *Boke of St. Albans*,<sup>51</sup> which is believed to be the product of Dame Juliana Berners;<sup>52</sup> but the *Treatise on Venerie* is unquestionably hers, for she signed her name at the end of it. The *Treatise* is not original, being merely a rimed version, with a few additions, of the older French "*Venerie de Twety*."<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Another version of the old quarrel between "*Amours-des Chiens and Amour-des Oiseaulx*."

<sup>50</sup> Ed. by Jérôme Pichon, Paris, 1888. See Jullien, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>51</sup> Printed at Saint Albans by the Schoolmaster-printer in 1486, reproduced in facsimile. With an Introd. by William Blades, London, 1901.

<sup>52</sup> Of Dame Juliana, sometimes called Dam Julyans Barnes, much has been written, but little is certainly known except that she lived at the beginning of the fifteenth century. She was probably prioress of Sopwell, and she was certainly the author of one of the first printed books written by an Englishwoman.

<sup>53</sup> Twety or Twici was the chief huntsman of Edward II. Another translation of his *Venerie*, evidently made in the fifteenth century, is edited in *Reliquiae Antiquae*, Vol. I, p. 149.



If Dame Juliana was acquainted with Vergil, or with the poems of Gratus, and Nemesianus, and Oppian, she gives no evidence of the acquaintance. Her *treatise on Venerie* is an unadorned piece of didacticism, of value to the philologist, and to one interested in the history of the chase, as well as to a student of the georgic; but the only charm it offers to the modern ear is its simplicity and quaintness of expression.

Dame Juliana makes no appeal to the Muse, and no apology for her subject. Perhaps she believed that the subject justified itself. Her reference to Trystam<sup>54</sup> is evidence that she takes no credit for originality. With an affectionate personal address to her reader, she begins to impart her valuable information.

She proceeds with various practical instructions relative to the chase. Of the times to hunt she writes:

Wheresoever ye fare by fryth or by fell,  
My dere chylde take hede how Tristam doth you tell  
How many maner beestys of venerie there were.  
Lysten to your dame and she shall yow lere  
Fowre maner beestys of venerie there are.  
The first of them is the hert, the secund is the hare  
The bore is oon of tho, the Wolff and not oon moo.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>54</sup> For the book of Sir Tristam see Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*, bk. VIII, ch. iii.

<sup>55</sup> Prefixed to the prose translation of the *Venerie de Twety*, Halliwell-Wright, *op. cit.*, are some rimes which the editor says do not belong to it. Some of these rimes correspond to Dame Juliana's opening words, but the writer begins with a moralization lacking in the *Boke of St. Albans*:

Alle suche dysport as voydith ydilnesse  
It syttyth every gentilman to knowe;  
For myrthe annexed is to gentilnesse,  
Qwerefore among alle other, as y trowe,  
To knowe the craft of honting and to blowe,  
As thys booke shall witnesse, is one the beste;  
For it is holsum, plesaunt and honest.  
And for to sette yonge hunterys in the way,  
To venerie y caste me fyrst to go,  
Of wheche IIIJ bestis be, that is to say  
The hare, the herte, the wulfhe, the wylde boor also.  
Of venerie forsothe ther be no moe,  
And so it shewith here in porte tewre  
Where every best is set in hys figure.



She proceeds with various practical instructions relative to the chase. Of times to hunt she writes:

Merke well thys sesonys folowing,  
 Tyone of grece begynneth at mydsomer day  
 And tyll holi Roode day lastyth, as I you say.  
 The seson of the fox at the Nativite.  
 Tyll the annunciation of oure lady fre  
 Seson of the Roebuck at Easter shall beginne  
 The season of the Roo begynneth at Michelmas  
 And hit shall endure and last ontill Candilmas.  
 At Michelmas begynneth huntynge of the hare  
 And lastith till midsomer ther nyll no man hyt spare.

Like a good religious, the Dame marks her seasons not by the heathen constellations, but by the Christian festivals of the year.

After some matter concerning the hare she interpolates a discussion between the Master of the Hunt and his man, repeating portions of the information already given, but using a different source. After this she concludes with instructions concerning the dismemberment of various beasts.

The text, except in the interpolated dialogue, is addressed to "my dere childe." Mr. Blades suggests that it was probably written for a mother to use as a school-book to teach her son reading and venery.

### 3. *Sixteenth-Century Didactics on the Chase.*

In France, and in Italy, sixteenth-century poets treat the subject of the chase more or less in the fashion of the georgic. It is perhaps only natural that in England the georgic muse was doubtful of her powers, that the Vergilian type of didactic poetry made little appeal in a period that throbbed with the poetry and the passion of the age of Shakespeare. But the literary history of France and of Italy was in a different stage of development. In Italy the poets knew that they would find listeners interested in any subject treated in the manner of the classics; in France at this time as in the three preceding cen-

turies the poets knew that they would always find listeners interested in the subject of the chase.<sup>56</sup>

Before 1525, Guillaume Cretin or Crestin<sup>57</sup> took up again the old quarrel of the hunters, in *Le Debat entre deux dames sur le passe temps des chiens et des oiseaulx*, which is an eclogue rather than a georgic. Jean Passerat's<sup>58</sup> poem *Le Chien Courant*, composed at the request of Henry III, begins, at least, with the georgic features, eulogy of the reigning prince, and a formal announcement of the subject:

Dans ces forests, ou bruit un doux zephyre,  
Je veux des chiens et de la chasse écrire.

Henry, grand roy, fleur des princes du monde,  
A qui Diane en la chasse est seconde,  
Donne courage et force à ton sujet  
De bien traiter un si noble sujet.<sup>59</sup>

According to Jullien,<sup>60</sup> Jacques-Auguste de Thou, "voulut célébrer dans la langue de Virgile et d'Horace le noble déduit des oiseaux." In 1581 the *Hieracosophion, or De re accipitraria*,<sup>61</sup> appeared in print. This was a poetical treatise, in which, observes Jullien, the author overcame the difficulties in his way, and produced a work that in the judgment of the severest critics has placed its author in the foremost ranks of the moderns who have devoted themselves to the cultivation of Latin letters.

Claude Gauchet's<sup>62</sup> poem, *Le Plaisir des Champs avec la Venerie Volerie et Pescherie* was begun before the publication of de Thou's Latin treatise, but it was not printed until 1583.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>56</sup> In 1575 Florent Chrétien translated Oppian's *Cynegetics* for his young pupil, Henry of Bourbon. See Jullien, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

<sup>57</sup> Crestin was chorister of the Sainte-Chapelle, Paris. He died c. 1525. *Le Debat* was printed at Paris, 1528, re-ed. 1723, and in the *Cabinet de Venerie*, 1882.

<sup>58</sup> 1534-1602.

<sup>59</sup> Jullien, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

<sup>60</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 187 ff.

<sup>61</sup> I quote the title from Jullien.

<sup>62</sup> Claude Gauchet was born at Dampmartin in Champagne, c. 1540. He was almoner ordinary to the king, and afterwards Prior of Beaujour.

<sup>63</sup> The work was re-edited, 1604, with many changes and omissions.



It is an interesting poem; occasionally, as in the description of Beaujour, very charming. Anticipating Thomson's *Seasons*, Gauchet divides his poem into four parts, "Spring," "Summer," "Autumn," "Winter." But although Gauchet introduces passages that are purely georgic, since they give advice concerning husbandry, he by no means follows the georgic plan, whereas Thomson, who rarely offers his reader practical advice, and that never directly, illustrates in his poems almost all the other georgic features, and manifestly imitates the plan of the *Georgics*.<sup>64</sup>

*Le Plaisir des Champs* is a poem of rural life, chiefly idyllic in character: the poet announces his subject as "the Pleasure" of country life. In "Spring," he depicts the happenings of a day, from dawn until night; painting the loveliness of the meadows and forests of Beaujour; following the hounds to the hunt; picturing Shepherdesses confiding their dawning love affairs while they watch their sheep; describing the village evening feast; and finally recounting a dream that visits him at close of day. But the pleasures in which the poet is most interested are the pleasures of the chase. The greater part of *Le Plaisir* describes sixteenth-century methods of hunting game of all sorts, from the chase of the boar to the snaring of larks.

The first book, "Le Printemps" begins:

Il est temps de quitter Vénus et son flambeau,  
L'arc cupidonien, les traicts et le bandeau,  
Les larmes, les souspirs, et par autre exercice  
Chasser les aiguillons dont nous espoit telle vice,  
Il faut, d'un trac nouveau, suyvre par les forestz  
Une Diane chaste, et tout chargez de retz  
De panneaux, et d'espieux, de bourses, de cordage,  
De pants et d'autr' engins propres à tel usage,  
Dédaignans Cupidon le suyvre par les bois,  
Criantz, courantz, brossantz aux lieux les plus espoix:  
Chassons l'oisiveté et la molle paresse  
Pour suyvre allegrement ceste chaste Déesse;  
Ceste exercice gay, vainqueur d'oisiveté  
L'on appelle, a bon droiet, amy de chasteté.

Prosper Blanchemain's edition, Paris, 1869, gives the original poem with notes citing the later changes.

<sup>64</sup> See above, p. 44.



Such an introduction leads one to expect a poem on the chase; and the passages immediately following suggest that the poet has in mind the georgic model. There is the conventional address to Diana, goddess of the hunt:

Sus doncq' guide mes pas, ô vierge chasseresse;  
Donne à ma Muse effort tant que haut elle entonne  
Les plaisirs qu'en chassant par les bois on se donne.

The poet then marks the entrance of spring by the position of the signs of the zodiac, and he makes a personal address to his friends Ronsard, Baïf, and other famous men of the times. But here he ceases to follow the georgic type, for after describing the preparations made for a supper in the woods, he represents himself straying alone, making a complaint on the cruelty of his lady, a theme decidedly pastoral, not georgic. Straying farther, he overhears a shepherdess singing her love troubles, and at sunset he returns home.

In the following section a fox hunt is described, after that a badger hunt. Then in the manner of the mediæval vision poem, the writer tells how he lay on the soft moss and dreamed that Diana came and confessed her love for him; but in the midst of his delight he awakened. A rabbit hunt is then described, and a short section is devoted to fishing. An account is given of a village festival with the dance; then follow two poems about sorrowing and love-lorn shepherds. After this, the poet overhears a conversation of georgic nature between two speakers named Michaut and Phlippot, who describe the ravages of a fearful storm, which, they agree, has been sent in punishment for the crimes of the day. Thereupon they lament the evils of the time, mourning over grief-stricken France, more sorrowful in contrast with her former glories.<sup>65</sup>

Following this is a discourse between the citizen and a hunter, in which city and country life are compared. The hunter outtalks the citizen, and makes him listen to a lengthy georgic on the building of a country house, supplemented by detailed

<sup>65</sup> This eclogue was suppressed in the edition of 1604, and replaced by the "Discour du Chasseur et du Citadin," pp. 93 ff.

instructions concerning farm life.<sup>66</sup> Incidentally, Gauchet dwells upon the happy lot of the peasant who has the means to live, and mentions the joys of different forms of the chase. Altho at one point of the discourse, the citizen exclaims of so much work for so little profit,

le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle,

he is finally convinced by the hunter, and declares that had he the remaking of his destiny there is nothing he could desire so greatly as life in the country.

After this the poet describes his return to Beaujour and the first book ends.

No eclogues are found in the three remaining books. In "Summer," harvest, harvest customs and the implements used for harvesting are described. In "Autumn," the poet draws a picture of the vintage, dwelling on the gay side, but writing technically of the methods of wine-making; perhaps because of the difficulties of this theme he expresses himself "tant affoiblés pour chanter tel sujet." But all three poems "Summer," "Autumn" and "Winter" treat chiefly of the hunt. Gauchet lingers on the joyous nature of field sports, but he does not neglect to give practical and technical information, as for example in "La Curée" and in "Le Foloioit or the Moyen de Prendre les Alouettes au miroir."<sup>67</sup>

Much of Gauchet's poem makes pleasant reading. The Prior of Beaujour rejoices so frankly in the delights of the fields that he wins his reader to rejoice with him. *Le Plaisir des Champs* is a work that must be highly prized in any collection of literature on the chase; it is of even greater value as an illustration of the blending of the eclogue and the georgic type in a poem which is a delightful example of the pastoral in the broadest sense of that elastic word.

In the long list of sixteenth-century didactics in Italy there

<sup>66</sup> This discourse suggests an abbreviated version of Vanière's *Praedium Rusticum*. See above, p. 68.

<sup>67</sup> "Summer," p. 144.



are several poems on the chase. Of Cardinal Adrian's *Venatio*, published by Aldus, 1505, I know little more than the name. Thomas Walsh<sup>68</sup> pronounces it an "elegant piece of Latinity." Tiraboschi has almost nothing to say about it. It was, however, thought worthy of publication in at least two editions, for it was reprinted in 1564, at Venice, in a volume with the cynegetics of Gratius and Nemesianus.<sup>69</sup>

To Guinguené I am indebted for an account of Tito Giovanni Scandianese's *Caccia*, published in 1556. The poem is a combination of the cynegetic and the ixeutic, written in octosyllabics in four books. The first opens with a eulogy of the chase, and continues by eulogizing celebrated hunters of antiquity. The reader is then instructed in various subjects that the poet thinks necessary for the good hunter, such, for example, as weather signs.

In the second book, the poet further imitates the classic models by a discussion of the appearance and the qualities of the good steed; and he dwells on the countries that produce the best horses. Dogs are discussed, and as Vergil describes the "arms" with which the farmer must "conquer" the soil, so Scandianese writes of the "arms" that the huntsman must know how to use.

In the third book, various modes of the chase are described, from the hunting of the hare to the pursuit of lions and tigers; and in the fourth book precepts are given concerning the capture of birds of prey.

Guinguené observes that Scandianese imitates and often translates ancient writers, especially Gratius and Nemesianus, whose works having been printed as recently as 1534 were little known. However, Scandianese saved his readers the joyous task of searching echoes, for he took great pains to acknowledge his imitations.

Of Natal Conti's *De Venatione libri VI* I know nothing except that it was published in Venice in 1557.<sup>70</sup> Pietro Angelio da

<sup>68</sup> *Catholic Encycl.*, Vol. I, p. 161.

<sup>69</sup> See above, p. 109, n. 27.

<sup>70</sup> See Tiraboschi, *op. cit.*, Tomo VII, p. 2140.



Barga's cynegetic, published in 1561, has received appreciation at least at the hands of his countrymen, for Tiraboschi pronounces it one of the best works of modern Latin poetry, and Giovanni di Niccolo da Falgano admired it sufficiently to translate it into Tuscan verse.<sup>71</sup>

Da Barga wrote also an ixeutic in four books *Sulla Uccellazione*, but only the first book was published, for after reading it the poet became so discouraged that he suppressed the remainder of the poem.

Erasmo da Valvasone's *Caccia*, first published in 1591,<sup>72</sup> is the last of the sixteenth-century Italian cynegetics, one of the most interesting poems on the subject of the hunt. It has the distinction of having been praised by Torquato Tasso; and, if one may judge from the pleasant account that Guingené gives of it, it is not unworthy of praise.

*La Caccia* is a very long poem, five cantos, containing in all from seven thousand to eight thousand lines. The subject matter is like that of the poet's predecessors, but the theme is developed differently, on a framework corresponding more nearly to that of the *Georgics*.

The first book begins with a discussion of the origin of the chase, which arose out of the necessity of protecting the flocks against wild animals, after man had lost the innocence of the first age and had begun to live on flesh meat. Then the reader is told of the degrees by which this necessary exercise became an art, and is informed of the kind of arms to be used in hunting. The subject of the varieties of hunting dogs gives opportunity for the stock introduction of the theme of foreign lands and the evils of luxury. There is introduced here, also, a moralization on beauty. Thruout the whole poem, says Guingené, precepts and descriptions appear as episodes. Some, extended, consist of whole fables: these, instead of breaking the thread of the poem,

<sup>71</sup> See Mazzoni, *Scritt. ital.*, t. I, par. 2, p. 747.

<sup>72</sup> Olimpio Marucci, Bergamo, Ventura, 1591; Venezia, 1593, 1602. The poem was written in the poet's youth, but it was not published until two years before his death, having been revised by him at his leisure.

are placed at the end. A long, characteristic digression is that by which, in the second book, the poet accounts for the origin of the famous hunting dogs of Charsun in Istria. Their origin is traced to the Argonautic expedition. In the course of their wanderings, the Argonauts are said to have arrived in these countries. Medea, touched by the hospitality of the people, uses her magic arts to confer upon the waters of Istria properties that give marvellous virtue to dogs that drink from the rivers flowing from the source of the Timavus. Incidentally, there is introduced in the story a priest who predicts the glory of Venice, and the prosperity of Istria under the house of Austria, a not unskillful treatment of a favorite georgic convention.

Simplicity of heart and Christian piety are enumerated among the virtues of a good hunter, who should never fail to hear mass, and who should be especially mindful of the Virgin Mary. The hunter who invokes her aid may be sure of success, and he needs have nothing to fear from winds or storms, nor from magicians nor sorcerers. If the hunter neglects to pray, if he becomes a libertine and impious, he risks punishment such as befell one Theron, a youth beautiful and pious, famed for his skill at the chase. Travelling abroad he became corrupted, and returning home scandalized the comrades whom he had once edified. Taking part in a boar hunt he was cruelly killed by the boar, an evident punishment, to which the poet applies the lesson of Vergil,

Imparate giustitia, o genti humane,  
E non spregiar le Deita Sovrane.<sup>72</sup>

In the fourth book, the poet forgets his Christian precepts; and exhorting noble youths to all the ardour that the chase demands, he tells them that they need not fear that dust, sunburn, or fatigue will make them less attractive to the fair; for Hippolytus set afire Phædra, Adonis Venus, Cephalus Aurora and so forth. Poetic illustrations, remarks Guinguené, but somewhat far from the Ave Maria and the Mass.

Following this the poet discourses further of various modes

<sup>72</sup> Cp. *Discite iustitiam moniti et non temnere divos* (*Aen.* 6, 620).



of the chase, and of various sorts of weapons; then he expresses a wish that it were possible for young hunters to encounter in the woods the hind of Arthur with its ruby horns (it seems unnecessary to remember that hinds do not possess horns), its iron feet and its hair golden as the fleece of Phryxus and Helle. This leads to the tale of an adventure of King Arthur who followed this enchanted hind. It appears, says Guinguené, that in a didactic poem, Valvasone desires to rival Bojardo and Ariosto. The episode may seem far-fetched continues the French critic, but it is brilliant in itself "revêtu de riches couleurs, et mêlé de leçons de sagesse dont le poète assure que le roi Arthur fit son profit, et dont chacun roi ou sujet, peut faire aussi le sien."

The fifth book of *La Caccia* treats of birds of prey used in the hunt. The subject is treated in the usual manner; varieties of birds are named, and directions are given for breeding them and caring for them. The book ends with a fable from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the story of Nisus and Scylla.

The style of the poem, says Guinguené, is in general poetic and animated, the rime and the octave well used. The reading may fatigue, but it will not bore the reader. Valvasone shows a taste less pure than that of the *Api*, *La Coltivazione* and *La Nautica*, but after them this didactic on the chase deserves a distinguished place.

#### 4. Eighteenth-Century Didactics on the Chase.

John Gay, who fathered English comic opera, and delighted the world with the charming freshness of *The Shepherd's Week*, tried his skill, also, at the georgic. In this type, as in the *Beggar's Opera*, he was a pioneer; for he appears to have led the English poets who wrote didactic verses on rural sports other than fishing. Dame Juliana Berner's rimes on *Venerie*<sup>74</sup> hardly count, even if one charitably reckons her among the poets.

Gay's poem, *Rural Sports, A Georgic*,<sup>75</sup> was published in

<sup>74</sup> See above, pp. 114 ff.

<sup>75</sup> *The Poems of John Gay*, The Muses Library, N. Y., E. P. Dutton & Co.

1713. It is in two cantos written in rimed couplets. To a certain extent, the framework of the *Georgics* is followed, and Vergil is certainly imitated; but Gay does not seem to have in mind earlier writers on the chase. His poem lacks the stock opening of the georgic; it begins with an address to those who have known the sweets of rural life, and the poet continues in true georgic spirit, by informing the reader that he himself has been immured in the town, the home of faction, scandal, and other kindred evils peculiar to the eighteenth-century town. He will now chose a calm retreat.

Where fields and shades, and the refreshing clime  
Inspire the sylvan song and prompt my rhyme.  
My Muse shall rove through flow'ry meads and plains,  
And deck with rural sports her native strains,  
And the same road ambitiously pursue,  
Frequented by the Mantuan swain and you,

“you” meaning Mr. Pope, to whom the poem is dedicated.

At dawn, the poet takes his way to watch the farmer's early care “in the revolving labors of the year.”<sup>76</sup> He describes very pleasantly the farmers' work in the morning in early spring, tells the reader how at noon, when bright Phœbus gains the height of Heaven, he betakes himself to the forest, where he can enjoy the sweets of evening. Vergil appears to satisfy the poet quite as well as Nature, if one can judge by the lines,

Here I peruse the Mantuan's Georgic strains,  
And learn the labours of Italian swains;  
In ev'ry page I see new landscapes rise,  
And all Hesperia opens to my eyes.  
I wander o'er the various rural toil,  
And know the nature of each different soil:  
This waving field is gilded o'er with corn  
That spreading trees with blushing fruit adorn:  
Here I survey the purple vintage grow,  
Climb round the poles, and rise in graceful row:  
Now I behold the steed curvet and bound,

---

<sup>76</sup> Cp. *Georg.* II, 401-402.

redit agricolis labor actus in orbem  
atque in se sua per vestigia volvitur annus.



And paw with restless hoof the smoking ground;  
 The dewlap'd bull now chase along the plain,  
 While burning love ferments in ev'ry vein.

. . . . .  
 The careful insect 'midst his work I view,  
 Now from the flowers exhaust the fragrant dew;  
 With golden treasures load his little thighs,  
 And steer his distant journey through the skies;  
 Some against hostile drones the hive defend;  
 Others with sweets the waxen cells distend:  
 Each in the toil his destined office bears,  
 And in the little bulk a mighty soul appears.

At evening the poet strays to "Neptune's bounds" to take farewell of parting day, lingering over a delightful description of the sunset. Night oppresses him with the sense of his limitations; but in the next passage, he cheers himself with the thought of the joyous sports afforded by the revolving seasons.

Finally the reader arrives at the long deferred account of "rural sports." Spring, declares the poet, is the time to fish, and, thereupon, he begins to instruct his reader how to catch the "finny brood," giving a description of the modes of trout fishing and salmon fishing, the latter a very unpleasant picture. The "scaly prey" are to be saved from the hostile jaws of the ravening otter that they may be delivered over to the mercy of man; and the concluding passage loftily declares,

Around the steel no tortured worm shall twine,  
 No blood of living insects stain my line;  
 Let me, less cruel, cast the feather'd hook  
 With pliant rod athwart the pebbled brook,  
 Silent along the mazy margin stray,  
 And with the fur-wrought fly delude the prey.

The second canto begins by calling upon the "sporting Muse" to draw the flowing rein, lest the reader tire of the "watery song."

The hunter is then admonished to refrain from the chase until the golden corn has been reaped, lest the plowman's labor be rendered vain. However, if in the meantime the bosom glow for sylvan sport, there may be permitted the chase of the hare.

Carried away by enthusiasm for his subject, the poet cries of the pursuing hound,

She turns, he winds, and soon regains the way,  
Then tears with gory mouth the screaming prey;

and, as if quite unconscious of the cruel ugliness of the picture he has just painted, continues,

What various sport does rural life afford!  
What unbought dainties heap the wholesome board!

An interesting commentary, not so much on Gay's lack of feeling, as on the laws of nature and of life.

Being wise enough to doubt his skill, the poet leaves the fox hunt and the pursuit of the stag for worthier hands. In an episode praising the joys of country life he imitates Vergil's "O fortunatos nimium,"<sup>77</sup> and contrasts the health and happiness of the rural maid with the courtly dame tormented by the spleen amidst the luxuries and disease-breeding idleness of city life. Gay's rural maid, like Dodsley's Patty,<sup>78</sup> seems even more blessed than the heroine of the pastoral, for she lives in a Golden Age of unclouded happiness, from the days of youth and love, thru the joys of maternity and cheerful toil,

Till age the latest thread of life unwinds.

Then while the poet is yet convinced that his picture is true, he exclaims,

Ye happy fields, unknown to noise and strife,  
The kind rewarders of industrious life;  
. . . . .  
Farewell, amusing thoughts and peaceful hours.

So ends the mediocre poem that might be called an introductory chapter in the history of the eighteenth-century cynaesthetic. Thomas Tickell, in his versified *Fragments on Hunting*,<sup>79</sup> claims to be the first to sing of this subject in British verse. He was probably in ignorance of Dame Juliana Berner's *Venerie*;

<sup>77</sup> *Georg.* II, 458.

<sup>78</sup> See above, p. 70.

<sup>79</sup> Chalmers's *Eng. Poets*, vol. XI.



his poem was certainly written before Somerville's *Chase*, which was published in 1735; and as far as Gay is concerned Tickell is justified in his claim, for Gay does not treat technically of hunting. He does, it is true, give precepts concerning the fisherman's art, but he contents himself with merely describing certain moments of the chase.

Tickell makes no mention, so far as I know, of any indebtedness to Grattius or Oppian or Nemesianus, and there is no evidence that he was acquainted with the French and Italian poems on the chase. He imitates Vergil closely, and various passages of the *Fragment* are clearly echoes of the *Georgics*.

The beginning is a statement of the subject, the stock opening of the Vergilian didactic; it is followed by the poet's declaration that he is the first to treat his theme in British verse. Dogs are next discussed in the fashion of the earlier writers of cynegetics, as cattle are sung in the *Georgics*. The ideal dog is described, as is the ideal bull in the third *Georgic*, and Vergil is again imitated in a spring passage.<sup>80</sup> The Golden Age, says the poet is a time when the lion and the lamb lay down together, but "our daring mother broke the sole command, then wrath came down."

Referring to Nimrod, the first hunter, Tickell exclaims,

Ah! had he there restrained his tyrant hand!  
 Let me ye powers an humbler wreath demand.  
 No pomps I ask, which crowns and sceptres yield,  
 Nor dangerous laurels in the dusty field;  
 Fast by the forest and the limpid spring,  
 Give me the warfare of the woods to sing,  
 To breed my whelps and healthful press the game,  
 A mean, inglorious, but a guiltless name.

One more patent imitation of Vergil's prayer to the Muses to grant him, 'inglorious, the love of woods, and fields and streams.'

The *Fragment* ends with a reference to great Maro, and to the third and fourth *Georgics*.

<sup>80</sup> Cp. *Georg.* II, 325 ff.; *Georg.* III, 242 ff.

Tickell's work is of no importance as a poem, nor as a georgic, but it is interesting as the beginning of the first effort at an English cynegetic of the formal Vergilian type of didactic poetry.

William Somerville's *Chase*,<sup>80a</sup> written in 1735, is, like Gay's *Rural Sports*, professedly a georgic. In his interesting preface, Somerville writes, "I have intermixed the preceptive parts with so many descriptions and digressions in the Georgic manner, that I hope they will not be tedious."

*The Chase* is, so far as I know, the only complete poem on the subject in English. In his preface Somerville mentions Oppian and Gratius and Nemesianus. He remarks that one might have expected to see the subject treated in full in the third *Georgic* of Vergil; and he quotes Vergil's lines on dogs and on the hunt. After some further observations on the chase he remarks, "The gentlemen who are fond of a jingle at the close of every verse, and think no poem truly musical but what is in rime, will here find themselves disappointed. If they be pleased to read over the short preface before the *Paradise Lost*, and in Mr. Smith's poem in memory of his friend Mr. John Philips . . . they may be of another opinion. For my own part, I shall not be ashamed to follow the example of Milton, Thomson, and all our best tragic writers . . .

But I have done . . . . .

Hark, away,  
Cast far behind the lingering cares of life,  
Cithaeron calls aloud, and in full cry  
Thy hounds, Taygetus; Epidaurus trains  
For us the generous steed; the hunter shouts,  
And cheering cries assenting woods return.

(*Georg.* III, 42-45.)

*The Chase* is in four books, very well planned, and if one be interested in the subject, it is easy to understand how the poem passed thru nine successive editions gotten up with all the attractions that the publishers of the time could offer. And even altho the reader is not interested in the subject, if he is just, he must

<sup>80a</sup> R. Anderson, *The Wks. of the British Poets*, vol. 8, 445-544.



still admit with Dr. Johnson that "to this poem praise can not be totally denied."

*The Chase*, as Somerville states in his preface, follows the conventions of the georgic. Since the poet does not treat of hunting as a rural occupation necessary for the preservation of peace and life, but as an amusement of the country gentleman, he may be said to use the pastime motive of the *Georgics* as his subject; Vergil's central theme, the glorification of labor, is left untouched. But all the other important features of the georgic are illustrated in the poem, from the stock opening to the long narrative episode at the close.

Somerville imitates the ancients in his treatment of his theme; but he knows his subject, for he was a mighty hunter in his day, and he recalls realistically the scenes in which he once bore a joyous part. He dwells on the precepts of his art quite as lovingly as does Vergil. He regards the chase as a noble art, and he teaches the necessity of following it according to rule and order, with a certain gentlemanly restraint very different from that of our rude forefathers.

Throughout, Somerville shows a great delight in the outdoor world, particularly the world of early morning; and altho his descriptions of nature are often very conventional, he frequently shows that he does not see "thru the spectacles of books." His weather signs are clearly drawn from a knowledge of English climate, not from the mere reading of Vergil's 'certain signs.'

Somerville thinks that his theme needs no apology, but he believes that there are themes below the dignity of the Muse, for after telling of the care and training of hounds he writes,

Of lesser ills the Muse declines to sing,  
Nor stoops so low; of these each groom can tell  
The proper remedy.

A piece of poetical commonsense highly to be recommended.

The critics cannot say of Somerville as they say of Thomson, that he overlooks the cruelty of nature; for the cruel laws of life furnish the motive whereby the poet justifies the hunt. He does not seem to have ideals even about the Golden Age, for in speak-

ing of the beasts that should be preserved and of those that should be destroyed, he writes,

Should not man's care  
Improve his growing stocks, their kinds might fail,  
Man might once more on roots and acorns feed,  
And through the desert range shivering forlorn,  
Quite destitute of every solace dear  
And every smiling gaiety of life.

The picture seems to owe something to Thomson's description of the savage state of man before the coming of Industry,<sup>81</sup> and is the nearest approach that Somerville makes to Vergil's theme of the reward of toil.

Somerville has no sympathy with the sentimentalists who think that it is cruel to kill animals; he thinks it cruel not to kill when it is necessary to do so. But he holds with the eighteenth-century philosophy that war is guilt, and seems to feel that in the chase man can satisfy with innocence the passions that would otherwise lead to the oppression of the human race. In the concluding lines of the second book he cries,

Ye proud oppressors, whose vain hearts exult  
In wantonness of power, 'gainst the brute race,  
Fierce robbers like yourselves, a guiltless war  
Wage uncontrolled: here quench your thirst of blood;  
But learn from Aurengzebe to spare mankind.

Yet, that he has some sympathy with the brute race may be seen from the conclusion of the fourth book in which he addresses a eulogy on mercy (perhaps a little inconsistent in a poem on the chase) to the prince who saves the brave stag from the hungry pack.

Somerville feels that God's gifts to man are good. He believes in the immortality of the soul,<sup>82</sup> and reverences deeply the Supreme Power. In his delight in remembering the joys of exercise and health, he reveals his personality, strong and vigorous even in old age. But for all his individuality he does not

<sup>81</sup> *Autumn*, 57 ff.

<sup>82</sup> See the opening lines of *Book iv*.



scorn to color his pages with sentiments taken directly from the classics. His address to "the happy ranger of the fields," beginning,

O happy, if ye knew your happy state

is only another imitation of Vergil's "O fortunatos nimium,"<sup>83</sup> and the concluding prayer, as Myra Reynolds points out in her *Nature in English Poetry*,<sup>83a</sup> is closely modelled after the concluding lines of Thomson's *Autumn*, in which Thomson imitates Vergil's prayer to the Muses.

Somerville's *Chase* has been read, not only with interest, but with enthusiasm by lovers of the noble art. Prose writers on rural sports frequently pay Somerville the compliment of quoting his spirited lines.<sup>84</sup> Yet when the reader, indifferent to the subject of the chase, has been just enough to agree with Dr. Johnson that "to this poem praise can not be totally denied," pardon may be granted for the honest statement that Somerville's effort is to be praised more for truth than for poetry.

I am not acquainted with any other English poet of the eighteenth century who imitated Somerville in writing of the chase. Vanière treats the subject in the *Praedium Rusticum*, writing of different modes of pursuing different animals, from the hare to the wolf, the lion, and the tiger; and in 1775, an Italian poet named Antonio Tirabosco<sup>85</sup> published a poem entitled *L'Uccellagione*, but I know nothing more than the name of the work.

Mazzoni<sup>85a</sup> names three nineteenth-century Italian poems on the chase, written by Lorenzo Tornieri, who translated Vergil's *Georgics*. The subjects of the poems are *La caccia delle allodole col paretaio*, *La caccia delle quaglie*, *La caccia della lepre*. In

<sup>83</sup> *Georg.* II, 458.

<sup>83a</sup> *Treatment of Nature in Eng. Poetry from Pope to Wordsworth*, University of Chicago, 2d ed.

<sup>84</sup> See, for example, Daniels, *op. cit.*

<sup>85</sup> See Concari, *op. cit.*

<sup>85a</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 78.

how far they are georgic in character, valuable in content, I am unable to say,

In the *Edinburgh Review*, 1808-09,<sup>86</sup> there is a very interesting critique of an anonymous nineteenth-century English poem on *Fowling*. The writer in the *Review* is, evidently, a fair and generous person, who does not believe that didactic poetry justifies itself; but who declares, nevertheless, "Though poetical talents are misapplied . . . to subjects of no powerful or reasonable interest, yet those talents may still be displayed upon such subjects. Accurate and lively description will always be delightful, and no subject can be fairly denominated unpoetical which holds out an opportunity to expatiate on the beauties of nature." Comparing the poem with that of Somerville, the reviewer concludes that the subject of Fowling is more romantic, that of the Chase more picturesque. Enough of the anonymous poem is quoted to give some idea of its merit, and to show that to a certain extent, at least, it is georgic in character, since it contains moral reflections, and the familiar invective against the shooting of grouse, partridges, pheasants, woodcock, snipe and ducks. In the first book, the poet has the lonely heaths for city life. In the five books of the poem are treated successively his background, in the last the equally wild loveliness of marsh and stream. The scenery in the latter, says the reviewer, is "most engaging." He adds that the passages he cites are not offered as specimens of exquisite or powerful poetry; but he finds in the whole poem the merit of truth and simplicity. The review seems due chiefly to the generous disposition of the writer, who is sure that there may be readers to whom the poem may afford more pleasure than it has done to himself. He concludes with the remark that the author of this poem (one hundred and fifty pages on the subject of fowling) might do something better than make poems on field sports.

After the first decade of the nineteenth century no other English poet appears to have had the courage to expend his

<sup>86</sup> Pp. 69 ff., "Fowling, a Poem in Five Books descriptive of Grouse, Partridge, Pheasant, Woodcock, Duck, Snipe Shooting." 12mo., pp. 150.



labor or his talent on a didactic on field sports; but as late as 1844, there was published in Paris a volume by Théophile Deyeux entitled *La Chassomanie*. To the student of the didactic poem on field sports this book is as interesting as it is curious, and even the casual reader might find it worth inspection. The author follows no definite plan; his arrangement of his subject matter suggests somewhat Claude Gauchet's *Plaisir des Champs*.<sup>87</sup> There is, however, no division according to the seasons, nor are there eclogues georgic in character such as are found in Gauchet. The resemblance lies in the number of poems of varying meter and length on such subjects as the hunting of the hare, the snaring of the lark with mirrors, and so forth. The chief digression consists of a number of reflections inserted as the contents of the hunter's notebook.

Deyeux appears to have been little influenced by earlier writers on the subject of the chase, nor does he seem to have Vergil in mind. He writes evidently from experience and from love of his subject, so that his verses, altho lacking poetic heights of imagination, have a certain pleasant simplicity and individuality. To the general reader, much more interesting than his detailed accounts of the pursuit of wild animals is the digression on the hunter's meditations, and his defense of the hunter's character. The hunter, remarks the poet, is accused of being gross and cruel; greatly is he misunderstood. The very life that he lives in the pure air of woods and fields develops in him admirable modes of thought, and in the days when it rains, perhaps for a week at a time, he is given to fruitful meditations. Consult his notebook and see. The "Chassomane's" reflections are prefaced by the following remark:

Tout homme doit de front mener deux existences,  
L'une est toute physique, et simultanément  
L'autre est toute morale et dicte les dépenses  
Dont le compte est soldé par le temperament.<sup>88</sup>

Then occur a series of meditations on Pride, Modesty, Anger,

<sup>87</sup> See above, pp. 117 ff.

<sup>88</sup> See "Le Carnet du Chassomane," *La Chassomanie*, pp. 115 ff.

Deception, Love, Hate, and so forth. Particularly interesting are Deyeux' verses on "La Chasse et la Guerre." They sound an opinion quite at variance with the familiar anti-war sentiments of the poets of the eighteenth century, the sentiments characteristic of almost all georgic poetry. The following lines are sufficient to illustrate the poet's point of view:

On trompe la société,  
Depuis qu'un rhéteur entêté  
S'en est venu, d'une voix sainte  
Proclamer dans la France éteinte,  
Qui sentit fremir son drapeau,  
Que la guerre était un fléau.  
Mais cette erreur, elle est profonde,  
La guerre est l'essence du monde,  
Elle est la volonté de Dieu,  
Qui partout allume le feu.<sup>89</sup>

How many other would-be poets may have followed in the footsteps of Deyeux I do not know. In *Les géorgiques chrétiennes*,<sup>90</sup> Francis Jammes has some passages descriptive of field sports, but Deyeux' *Chassomanie* is the latest complete work on the subject of the hunt with which I am acquainted. In these days when one can read of little else than human warfare, it would be a brave writer who would attempt to find an audience for poetic efforts on such a theme.

## II. OF FISHING. THE HALIEUTIC.

### 1. *Oppian of Cilicia.*

In the *Georgics*, Vergil alludes to the fisherman's art,<sup>1</sup> which he mentions among the results of the passing of the Golden Age. Father Jove saw fit to make men's wits keener by the hardships of life. Hence mortals learned to fish in rivers and to drag their dripping nets thru the sea. The subject of the didactic poem on fishing may thus be said to have been proposed.

Theocritus set the fashion of the piscatory eclogue in *Idyll*

<sup>89</sup> *La Chassomanie*, p. 196.

<sup>90</sup> See above, pp. 46-47.

<sup>1</sup> *Georg.* I, 141-142. See above, p. 41.



XXI. But not until the time of Sannazaro do any notable poets seem to have availed themselves of this model. The earliest extant poems on fishing, the fragmentary *Halieutica* ascribed to Ovid, and the *Halieutica* of Oppian appear to have been suggested by Vergil, not by Theocritus, since they are didactic rather than idyllic in character.

Defending the piscatory poets against their assailants, Mr. Jones remarks in the "Account of the Life and Writings of Oppian" prefixed to the English translation of the Greek poet's *Halieutics*, "If the Waters contain in them nothing but what is uncomfortable and dreadful, 'tis very strange that *Ovid*, who naturally loved what was soft and agreeable, should have made any attempt in this kind." Waiving the question of the discomfort and dread of the waters, the critics are still divided regarding Ovid's authorship of the fragmentary *Halieutica*, which those who ascribe it to him suppose to have been written during his banishment on the shores of the Euxine.<sup>2</sup> Whether or not Ovid wrote this fragment<sup>3</sup> the critics seem agreed that it was certainly written in the time of Ovid. In this poem is found for the first time the comparison between hunting, fowling, and fishing. The poet prefers his own occupation because of its freedom from the dangers that attend the chase.<sup>4</sup> He begins to describe his art, then advises his disciple not to put far out to sea, but to pursue the sport on shore. A description of the proper tackle, upon which so much depends, is promised, and

<sup>2</sup> See Walton and Cotton, *The Complete Angler*. With a bibliographical Pref. by the American Editor. N. Y., John Wiley, 1852, pp. xv ff. Among the lost works of antiquity on the subject the "American Editor" mentions the following: Cæcilius' or Cecilius' *De Re Piscatoria*, an epic poem; Pan-cratiæ the Arcadian's *Alieutica*; Numenius of Heraclæ's *Alieuticos*, an elegiac poem; Posidonius of Corinth's *Alieutica*, an epic poem; Seleucus of Emesa's *Aspalieutica*, an epic; Alexander the Ætolian's *Alieus*, an epic poem.

<sup>3</sup> There is usually prefixed to this work another brief fragment, entitled *Pontica*, supposed by some to be the remains of Nemesian's work on fishing. After Ovid's fragment is sometimes printed another of so little worth that the vexed question of its authorship is hardly worth considering.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. the views of Nemesianus and of Oppian of Cilicia. See above, p. 106.

there is a brief description of the varied play of fish after they are hooked, which draws from the American editor of Walton and Cotton<sup>5</sup> the exclamation, "There is such a spirit in these passages that we lament again and again the absence of those which are lost to us."

The most valuable work of antiquity on the subject of fishing is the *Halieutica* of Oppian of Cilicia,<sup>6</sup> a poem that has met with extravagant praise as well as with the coldest neglect.

The *Halieutica* was dedicated by Oppian to the Emperor Severus and his son Caracalla. Thus the poet follows the Vergilian tradition. And if report may be believed, the public reading of Oppian's poem was not less appreciated than the reading of Vergil's poems before Augustus. Oppian is said to have written the *Halieutica* during his life on the island of Melita, whither his father Agesilaus had been exiled by Severus. The Roman Emperors, according to the account of Dr. Drummond,<sup>7</sup> were interested in fishing, and Oppian in writing his poem on this subject hoped to secure the emperor's favor and a pardon for his father. Dr. Drummond hazards the remark, "If Georgics were a favorite topic in the days of Vergil, field sports may not have been less so in the days of Oppian." Whether because of the popularity of the subject or for some other equally interesting reason the *Halieutics* are said to have been read aloud in the temple of Apollo. Severus and his family were

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> For the identity of Oppian, see above, p. 104. There have been many editions and translations of the *Halieutica*. Among them may be mentioned the Florence edition of 1515, the Aldine, 1517, with the translation of L. Lippius, first published 1447; Schneider's edition, 1776, which includes the Latin prose translation of Turnebus. Among French translations are those of Florent Chrétien, Paris, 1575; Belin de Ballu (in prose), Strasburg, 1787; E. J. Bourquin, 1877. The only English translation that I know is the valuable version of Diaper and Jones, *Halieutics, of the Nature of Fishes and Fishing of the Ancients*. In five books. Translated from the Greek. With an account of Oppian's Life and Writings and a Catalogue of his Fishes. Oxford, 1722. Books I and II translated by Mr. Diaper, Books III, IV and V by John Jones, M. A.

<sup>7</sup> "The Life and Writings of Oppian." See above, p. 104, n. 17.



present; Oppian secured their favor by his eulogistic passages, and the Emperor offered him any reward that he might ask. Pleased by the filial piety of the poet, the Emperor not only granted pardon to Agesilaus, but gave Oppian besides a status for each of his "golden" verses.

In the English translation the poem is divided into two parts. The first and second books "translated by Mr. Diaper," treat of the "Nature of Fishes"; the third, fourth, and fifth books, "translated by John Jones, M. A.," treat of the "Fishing of the ancients."

The georgic model is followed in the opening passages, in which the poet announces his subject and addresses the prince in the following lines:

I sing the Natives of the boundless Main  
And tell what Kinds the wat'ry Depths contain.  
Thou, Mighty Prince, whom farthest Shores obey,  
Favor the Bard, and hear the humble Lay;  
While the Muse shows the liquid Worlds below,  
Where throng'd with busie Shoals the Waters flow;  
Their differing Forms and Ways of Life relates;  
And sings their constant Loves, and constant Hates;  
What various Arts the finny Herds beguile,  
And each cold Secret of the Fisher's Toil.  
Intrepid Souls! who pleasing Rest despise,  
To whirl in Eddies, and on Floods to rise;  
Who scorn the safety of the calmer Shore,  
Drive thro' the working Foam, and ply the lab'ring Oar,  
The Deep they fathom, search the doubtful Way,  
And thro' obscuring Depths pursue the Prey.

The three modes of the chase are described,<sup>8</sup> but Oppian finds the pursuit of sea creatures more fraught with dangers than the pursuit of creatures of the land and of the air.

The Fishers labor not on certain ground  
But in a leaky boat are tost around;

they face the fury of the winds and waves, they meet—

. . . Vast Whales, and monstrous nameless Kinds,  
The slender-woven Net, vimineous Weel,

---

<sup>8</sup> See above, p. 136.

The taper Angle, Line and barbed Steel,  
Are all the Tools his constant Toil employs;  
On Arms like these the Fishing Swain relies.  
But Fishers live altho exposed to Harms,  
They have their Pleasures, and the Sea its Charms.

After a passage on the Royal fishing equipment, the poet in conventional georgic fashion addresses Neptune and all the ocean deities, and then, like so many of his brother singers, comments upon the difficulty of his task.

Like most georgic poets, Oppian decries war. The following lines suggest Vergil, but they read even more like the pacifist sentiments of the eighteenth century:

Fondly we blame the Rage of Warring Fish,  
Who urg'd by Hunger must supply the Wish;  
When cruel Men, to whom their ready Food  
Kind Earth affords, yet thirst for human Blood.  
Peace grieved by Man, to brighter Regions fled,  
And angry Mars contending Nations led.  
Ambitious Youths with Thirst of Glory fir'd  
The proud Deformity of Scars admir'd.  
Power uncontroll'd maintained the wrongful Cause,  
Nor fear'd the weaker Force of silent Laws.\*

The poet then paints a picture of the horrors of misgovernment, ending with a prayer that the gods may prolong the halcyon days of the Emperor Severus,

Give Rust to Arms, and Leisure to the Song  
.  
.  
Preserve the Immortal Sire and aid the Godlike Son.

The third book, like the third *Georgic*, opens with a statement of the subject,

How captive Shoals reward the Fisher's Toils,  
What Force subdues, or specious Fraud beguiles,  
Attend great Prince, to thee the Seaborn Muse  
A Theme not foreign, tho' unsung, pursues.

An address to the Prince follows, then very much as Vergil and the cynegetic poets sum up the qualities of the ideal stallion

\* Cp. *Georg.* I, 505 ff.; Somerville, *The Chase*. See above, p. 131.



and the ideal dog, Oppian draws a portrait of the toiler who lives by pursuing the creatures of the deep:

First be the Fisher's Limbs compact and sound,  
With solid Flesh and well-braced Sinews bound.  
Let due Proportion ev'ry Part commend,  
Nor Leanness shrink too much, nor Fat distend.

Judicious art with long Experience joyn'd  
Inform the ready dictates of his Mind.

Let Resolution all his Passions sway.  
Nor Pleasures charm his Mind, nor Fears dismay.  
From short Repose let early Vigour rise.

Well let his Patience and his Health sustain  
Jove's piercing Storms, and Sirius' sultry reign.  
Let him with constant Love the Sea pursue,  
With eager Joy the pleasing Toil renew.  
So Thetis shall reward her faithful Swain,  
And all his Labours please the God of Gain.<sup>10</sup>

Directions are given as to the season and weathers in which to fish, and the poet emphasizes the necessity of observing the winds. Vergil's "certain signs" have their place in the *halieutic* as well as in the *georgic* and in the *cynegetic*.

Four sorts of fishers are described, those who use Hooks, Nets, Weels, and Tridents. The poet warns against the arts by which the Fishes cheat the Fishers, and continues with various practical directions.

In the fourth book, Oppian, "inspired," sings the loves of the fishes. In the fifth book he sings mainly of the "cetaceous kinds," concluding with what might be described as a watery prayer that the sea yield tribute to the "Roman Lord" and the "world be kept secure for Cæsar's reign."

Oppian digresses from his theme frequently, telling many ~~tales~~ and moralizing at length on such subjects as Sympathy, Love, Jealousy, Human Industry, the Nature of Man, the folly

<sup>10</sup> *Halieutics*, III, 45 ff.

of trying to resist the Divine Powers and so forth.<sup>11</sup> Mr. Jones<sup>12</sup> is deeply moved by the "unaffected" piety and good nature found in the pages of the *Halieutica*. This poem, he writes of Oppian, "had we no other history of his Life, would represent him to us under the amiable character of a young gentleman of the liveliest wit, sweetened with the most engaging virtue, and ennobled by Religion. In all his Digressions and Reflexions, he recommends Virtue with so agreeable an air, and discountenances Vice after so moving a Manner, as shows him to have been the best good Man, but far from having the Worst natur'd Muse. . . . His Moral Reflexions are very fine and judicious . . . His Religious Sentiments, considering he was a Heathen, are very conspicuous in his account of Divine Providence and the Divine Powers."

Diaper and Jones' translation of the *Halieutica* is particularly valuable, not only as the sole English rendering of the poem, but as an eighteenth-century version of Oppian. The translation reads very much like an original eighteenth century product adorned, like almost all other products of the time, by flowers from the gardens of the ancients. Knowing the *Halieutica* only thru the English of Diaper and Jones, one finds it a little hard to understand how the grammarian Tzetzes, who paraphrased the poem, called Oppian an "ocean of graces."<sup>13</sup> All poetry loses by translation; Greek poetry can certainly not be judged by imperfect specimens of the eighteenth century couplet, since it suffers enough from the best; and yet, remembering Pope's Homer, translated even as Nick Bottom was "translated," one reads with amazement in Mr. Jones'<sup>14</sup> Preface that the elder Scaliger calls Oppian "a divine and incomparable poet, one skilled in all Parts of Philosophy, the most perfect writer among the Greeks, and the only person that ever came up to Vergil." Standards of taste change, but the praise of divine beauty en-

<sup>11</sup> Cp. Deyeux, "Carnet du Chassomane." See above, p. 134.

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Cp. the Bibl. pref. to Walton and Cotton, *op. cit.*, p. xx.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*



dures. Hence one feels that there is some slight lack of understanding on the part of Mr. Jones when he writes, "Indeed, I know not how it happens, but there is scarce any of the ancients that deserves more or meets with less regard."

## 2. John Dennys' "Secrets of Angling"

From the time of Oppian of Cilicia until the beginning of the seventeenth century, I am acquainted with no didactic poem of importance on the fisherman's art. I know of only two works in which the subject is treated to any extent from the technical point of view. One is the Latin *De Vetula* or *De Vitula* written in the thirteenth or fourteenth century by Richard de Fournival.<sup>15</sup> A record of the different modes of fishing with worm, fly, torch and spear, night lines and so forth is said to be found in this poem.<sup>16</sup> Piers of Fulham's *Vayne conseytes of folysche love undyr colour of fysching and fowling*, ascribed to the year 1420,<sup>17</sup> is, as the title indicates, allegorical in character. There is nothing of the georgic in it except some interesting information concerning the arts of fishing and fowling. The following lines may give an idea of the poet's manner:

But in rennyng ryvers that bee commone  
There will I fische and take my fortune  
Wyth nettys and with angle hookys,  
And large weris and spenteris in narrow brookys.

The year 1613 begins an epoch in the history of the halieutic. There was published at this time in London, the first poetical treatise on the gentle craft, John Dennys' *Secrets of Angling*,<sup>18</sup> a poem that has been occasionally imitated, but never equalled.

<sup>15</sup> See above, p. 29.

<sup>16</sup> See Manly, *op. cit.*, p. 563.

<sup>17</sup> See above, p. 29.

<sup>18</sup> Little is known of the life of John Dennys. He lived in the neighborhood of Pucklehurst, Gloucestershire, and was buried at Pucklehurst, 1609. That he was the author of the *Secrets* was not discovered until 1811. In the first chapter of the *Complete Angler*, Izaak Walton quotes five stanzas from the *Secrets*. At first Walton ascribed the stanzas to Jo. Da. Later Jo. Da. was altered to Jo. Davors. Others had ascribed the lines to Donne or Davies. These verses are said to have been attributed to at least six

John Dennys may have read Oppian of Cilicia, or he may not. He was certainly acquainted with the classics, but his verses give no conclusive evidence that he knew the Halieutics of the ancients. Altho he claims no debt to Vergil, his poem is undoubtedly modeled to some extent on the *Georgics*; but this belated sixteenth century imitation has none of the faults so conspicuous in the eighteenth century Vergilian imitations. Dennys evidently drew his inspiration in part from the Mantuan; but it is an inspiration that breathes in the English poet's verse, not a distorted mask of the Latin singer, but an English creation living and lovely.

The introductory note of Roger Jackson, the publisher, to the edition of 1613, is worth reading, for it is marked by truths and is otherwise pertinent to the subject. Jackson states that the author intended to print the *Secrets* in his life, but was prevented by death. The publisher adds of the poem, "I find it not only savouring of Art and Honesty, two things now strangers unto many authors, but also both pleasant and profitable; and being loth to see a thing of such value lie hidden in obscurity, whilst matters of no moment pester the stalls of every stationer, I therefore make bold to publish it for the benefit and delight of all, trusting that I shall neither disparage the author nor dislike them.

"I need not, I think, apologize for either the use of the subject or for that it is reduced into the nature of a poem; for as touching the last, in that it is in verse, some count it by so much the more delightful; and I hold it every way as fit a subject for poetry as Husbandry. And touching the first, if Hunting and Hawking have been thought worthy delights and arts to be instructed in, I make no doubt but that this art of Angling is much more worthy practice and approbation; for it

poets of the name of Davies, due no doubt to the fact that J. D.'s poem was prefaced by certain commendatory verses signed Jo. Daves. *The Secrets of Angling* was reprinted in Arber's *English Garner*, vol. 1, 1877. More valuable editions are those of T. Westwood, London, W. Satchell and Co., 1883, and that of Piscator, *Biblioteca Curiosa*. Privately Printed, Edinburgh, 1885. For other editions see Westwood's Introduction, p. 6.



is a sport every way as pleasant, less chargeable, more profitable, and nothing so much subject to choler and impatience as those are. You shall find it more briefly, pleasantly, and exactly performed than any of this kind heretofore."

The *Secrets of Angling* may be described as a piscatory poem of the georgic type, written in three books, in eight-line stanzas of heroic measure, the first six verses riming alternately, the last two making a couplet. Dennys has no eulogies of the great, he has no address to a patron, no reference to famous historical characters, no device of foreign contrast, no panegyric to Great Britain. In other respects, however, he skilfully follows the Vergilian conventions; and altho he does not sing the praises of Great Britain, the Muses seem to have granted to him as truly as to Vergil the love of his native fields and rivers.

The first book has the conventional georgic opening; but after stating his subject, the author adds a characteristic explanation of the nature of his work:

Of Angling, and the Art thereof I sing,  
What kind of tools it doth behove to have;  
And with what pleasing bait a man may bring  
The fish to bite within the wat'ry wave.  
A work of thanks to such as in a thing  
Of harmless pleasure, have regard to save  
Their dearest souls from sin; and may intend  
Of precious time, some part therein to spend.

A charming and appropriate invocation to the water nymphs follows; after which there is an even more charming address to the brook "Sweet Boyd."

More "profitable," but still pleasant, are the poet's instructions concerning his art. Vergil gives detailed precepts regarding the implements of the farmer's toil. Dennys discourses of the implements of angling; when to provide them, how to select and care for them. He even gives practical advice as to the garments of the Angler. But however homely his subject matter, his verse is rarely prosaic, and charming comparisons and pleasant episodes are skillfully interwoven with his precepts. The "Answer to the Objection," tho meant as a defense of the

fisherman's art, is really a rhapsody in praise of country life, written with the enthusiasm of a lover of nature, and the reflexion of a religious philosopher. Some youthful gallant, admits the poet, will cry, perhaps, that it is a silly pastime to endure the toils and troubles of fishing, rather than to walk the streets in "nice array," to dance and sport and gamble in the town. Very wise and very gentle is the "Reply,"

I mean not here men's errors to reprove,  
Nor do envy their seeming happy state;  
But rather marvel why they do not love  
An honest sport that is without debate;  
Since their abus'd pastimes often move  
Their minds to anger and to mortal hate;  
And as in bad delights their time they spend,  
So oft it brings them to no better end.

Quite as convincing in its own lesser fashion as Vergil's contrast between the joys and virtues of the country, the vices and vanities of the city, is Dennys' contrast between the wholesome and happy recreation of the fisherman and the miserable existence of the society trifter. Were it not for the phrasing of John Dennys, simple and forcible (in spite of occasional padding), one might fancy himself listening to some moralizing poet of the eighteenth century. The following lines are one of the most interesting of the many variations of Vergil's Prayer to the Muses:<sup>19</sup>

O let me rather on the pleasant brink  
Of Tyne and Trent possess some dwelling-place;  
Where I may see my quill and cork down sink  
With eager bite of barbel, bleek or dace:  
And on the world and the Creator think,  
While they proud Thais' painted sheet embrace;

Let them that list these pastimes then pursue  
And on their pleasing fancies feed their fill;  
So I the fields and meadows green may view,  
And by the rivers fresh may walk at will,  
Among the daisies and the violets blue,  
Red hyacinth and yellow daffodil,

---

<sup>19</sup> Cp. *Georg.* II, 483-4.



Purple narcissus like the morning rays,  
Pale ganderglass and azure culverkeys.

I count it better pleasure to behold  
The goodly compass of the lofty sky;

The hills and mountains raised from the plains,

The rivers making way through Nature's chain,  
With headlong course into the sea profound,  
The surging sea beneath the valleys low,  
The valleys sweet, and lakes that lovely flow.

The lofty woods, the forests wide and long,  
Adorned with leaves and branches fresh and green;  
In whose cool bowers the birds with chanting joy  
Do welcome with their quire the Summer's Queen:  
The meadows fair where Flora's gifts among,  
Are intermixed the verdant grass between;  
The silver-scaled fish that softly swim  
Within the brooks and crystal watry brim.

The final stanza of the "Reply" has a rapturous note of religious joy in the things of the outward world. Almost a mystic, it seems, was John Dennys.

All these and many more of His creation  
That made the heavens, the Angler oft doth see;  
And takes therein no little delectation  
To think how strange and wonderful they be;  
Framing thereof an inward contemplation  
To set his thoughts from other fancies free,  
And while he looks on these with joyful eye,  
His mind is rapt above the starry sky.

In a pleasant episode the poet recounts the origin of the Art of Angling, an innocent variation of the Deucalion myth. When the new race of men sprang from stones after the Deluge there was no food for them, so Deucalion invented the art of angling and taught it to his people. Here the poet naïvely works in the theme of the Golden Age, which, he states, was a time when it was easy to angle, for the fish had not then been frightened of wicked men.

After having traced the varied stages of his art the poet announces that his weary Muse must rest, and "breathe or pause

a little at the least," a conclusion suggesting the last two lines of the second *Georgic*.

The opening of the second book of the *Secrets* recalls the beginning of the second *Georgic*.

*Before I taught what kind of tools were fit  
For him to have, that would an Angler be;  
And how he should with practice and with wit  
Provide himself thereof in best degree:  
Now doth remain to show how to the bit  
The fishes may be brought that erst were free;  
And with what pleasing baits enticed they are,  
To swallow down the hidden hook un'ware.*

The poet declares that he will not meddle with the great whale that hid the man of God inside him for three whole days, nor with the Ork that would have devoured Andromeda. He enumerates other great fish of which he will not sing, then proceeds to name the various sorts for which one can angle, making his list with a grace and skill not unworthy of his Master.

In writing of the gudgeon he makes an observation that proves his understanding of the first principles of the art of teaching:

*This fish the fittest for a learner is  
That in this Art delights to take some pain;  
For as high-flying hawks that often miss  
The swifter fowls, are easéd with a train;  
So to a young beginner yieldeth this,  
Such ready sport as makes him prove again;  
And leads him on with hope and glad desire,  
To greater skill and cunning to aspire.*

Musing on the capture of the Dace, he shows characteristic georgic realization of the dangers that lurk always in attendance on the joys of life,

*O world's deceit! how are we thrall'd by thee.  
Thou dost thy gall in sweetest pleasures hide!  
When most we think in happiest state to be,  
Then do we soonest into danger slide.  
Behold the fish that even now was free,  
Unto the deadly hook how is he tied!  
So vain delights allure us to the snare,  
Wherein un'wares we fast entangled are.*



Writing of the Sewant and the Flounder, with poetic inconsistency the poet who has but just sung the Golden Age as a time when fish were easily caught now pauses to reflect upon the cruel inequality of life in watery ways:

Unequal fate! that some are born to be  
 Fearful and mild, and for the rest a prey;  
 And others are ordained to live more free,  
 Without control or danger anyway.

The poet then describes various kinds of baits for various fishes, with directions as to the manner of bestowing hook and bait in the different seasons. The concluding fancy is not inappropriate:

But Phoebus now beyond the western Ind,  
 Beginneth to descend and draweth low;  
 And well the weather serves, and gentle wind,  
 Down with the tide and pleasant stream to row,  
 Unto some place where we may rest us in,  
 Until we shall another time begin.<sup>20</sup>

The third book treats of "the chief and fittest seasons" for angling, but before the poet gives his instructions in detail he decides that—

It shall behove  
 To show what gifts and qualities of mind  
 Belong to him that doth the pastime love.

Handsome rods, hooks of divers sorts, well-twisted lines, the finest tools avail nothing if the fisherman lacks certain necessary gifts of mind. Twelve virtues he must have: Faith and Hope and "Love and liking to the game," Patience to bear mishaps, and Humility to stoop or kneel, Strength, and Courage, and Liberality to feed the fishes often, to draw them near like the ancient hospitality that "sometime dwelt in Albion's fertile land," whence it is now banished, along with kindred virtues usually banished in the degenerate times that appear to have begotten georgic poetry. The Angler must have, also, Knowledge to make the fish bite when they are dull and slow, he must

<sup>20</sup> Cp. the concluding stanza of the *Faerie Queen*, Bk. I.

have Placability of Mind, he must have Thanks to that God who doth send both fish and fowl,

And still reserves enough in secret store  
To please the rich and to relieve the poor.

The eleventh qualification of the good Angler is Fasting long from all superfluous fare, the twelfth and last, Memory, not to forget to take all things needful for the craft.

Dennys' lines suggest Oppian's portrait of the ideal fisher,<sup>21</sup> but the English poet's angler is certainly not a copy of the Greek who gains his precarious living from the seas. Both must have strength and courage, but beyond this the resemblance does not go.

The Angler must choose weather that is neither too hot nor too cold. He must not fish at fleece-washing time, nor at flood;

Nor when the leaves begin to fall apace,  
While Nature doth her former work deface,  
Unclothing bush or tree of summer's green.<sup>22</sup>

The best hours of the day are from sunrise to nine o'clock. So lovely is the poet's dawn that the reader feels the stir of longing to arise and go with the gentle Master Angler through the pleasant fields, amidst sweet pastures, meadows fresh and sound,

When fair Aurora rising early shows  
Her blushing face among the Eastern hills,  
And dyes the heavenly vault with purple rows  
That far abroad the world with brightness fills;  
The meadows green or hoar with silver dews  
That on the earth the sable night distils,  
And chanting birds with merry notes bewray  
The near approaching of the cheerful day.

Each fish's favorite haunt is described for the benefit of the Angler, who must learn to know such lurking places. Then advice is given concerning all the hours when the Angler may

<sup>21</sup> See above, p. 140.

<sup>22</sup> Cp. *Georg.* II, 403.

Ac iam olim seras posuit cum vinea frondes  
frigidus et silvis Aquilo decussit honorem.



and may not fish; and lest he may forget his tools a short lesson is given to assist the memory. And now, sings the poet, we are arrived at the last

In wishéd harbour, where we wear to rest,  
And make an end of this our journey past:  
Here then in quiet road I think it best  
We strike our sails and steadfast anchor cast,  
For now the sun low setteth in the West,  
And ye boatswains! a merry carol sing  
To him that safely did us hither bring.<sup>23</sup>

Considering Roger Jackson's statement that the author intended to publish the *Secrets* before his death, Westwood <sup>24</sup> observes: "Perhaps he was withheld by some faintness of heart and some wisdom of reticence. The epoch was a trying one for the minor muse. The elder bards were dying out, but the national air still vibrated to their divine singing. It was hardly strange that a poet unknown to fame hesitated to bring forth his simple song of bleek and bream." Yet it is the simplicity of the song that makes its charm—simplicity alike of diction and of spirit. The childlike joy in outdoor things, the early morning quality of the poem, reflect something of the life and glow of the earlier Elizabethans. John Dennys makes the didactic poets of the eighteenth century seem world-weary and sentimental. Thomson, who loved to lie abed till noon, writes feelingly of the beauties of the dawn, but John Dennys, at least in the angling season, lived among the meadows and streams of which he sings, and he rejoiced in the outdoor world from sun-

<sup>23</sup> These lines echo very closely the concluding stanza of the first book of the *Faerie Queen*,

Now strike your sailes, yee jolly Mariners,  
For we be come unto a quiet rode,  
Where we must land some of our passengers,  
And light this weary vessell of her lode;  
Here she a while may make her safe abode,  
Till she repaired have her tackles spent,  
And wants supplide; and then againe abroad  
On the long voiage whereto she is bent:  
Well may she speede, and fairly finish her intent!

<sup>24</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 1.

rise to sunset. His moralizings are quaint and pleasant, and sometimes wise, suited to one who loved the gentle craft. His poem is not a glorification of toil, but it calls alluringly to the joys of country life. There is in it a spirit that Vergil himself could not but have loved.

William Lauson<sup>25</sup> remarks of the *Secrets of Angling*, "The Author by verse hath expressed much Learning, and by his Answer to the Objection shows himself to have been Virtuous. The subject itself is honest and pleasant; and sometimes profitable. Use it and give God all glory. Amen." A comment written with judgment that one appreciates all the more after having read the *Secrets* in contrast with the dreary dullness of the great body of georgic poetry. The *Secrets of Angling* is not a great poem, but it should hold an honoured place for sweetness of verse, for its beauty of description and for the lessons that the poet so gently and happily teaches. That this slight work has any importance in the history of English literature one can hardly say. Certainly, in the history of fishing literature no writer has graced his subject with lovelier lines. John Dennys must always hold an unrivaled place in the angler's library. Many readers have felt his poem's charm; lovers of poetry as well as lovers of the gentle craft owe a debt of gratitude for its rescue from oblivion.

### 3. *Later Seventeenth-Century Didactic Poems on Angling*

From John Dennys' *Secrets* to *Barker's Delight* is, undoubtedly, a descent. However, I do not know of any writer after Dennys who treated the theme of angling in didactic verse, until in 1657 Thomas Barker produced a small volume which bears the full title, *Barker's Delight, or the Art of Angling*. This is a work "Wherein are discovered many rare secrets very necessary to be known by all that delight in that Recreation, both for catching the Fish, and dressing thereof," a quaintly written

<sup>25</sup> Comments on the "Secrets of Angling," Arber's *English Garner*, Westminster, Archibald Constable & Co., 1903, p. 237.



book of prose instructions interspersed with bits of verse. Evidently Thomas Barker was not less skilled as a cook than as an angler. He appears less gifted as a poet. However, his verses have the merit of simplicity, and his instructions are generally to the point. I quote a specimen to show the author's manner:

. . . Your lines may be strong, but must not be longer than your rod.  
 The rod light and taper, thy tackle fine,  
 Thy lead two inches upon the line;  
 Bigger or lesse, according to the stream,  
 Angle in the dark, when others dream.  
 Or in a cloudy day with a lively worm.  
 The Bradlin is best; but give him a turn  
 Before thou do land a large well grown trout,  
 And if with a fly thou wilt have a bout  
 Overload not with links, that the fly may fall  
 First on the stream for that's all in all.  
 The line shorter than the rod, with a natural fly;  
 But the chief point of all is the cookery.

Following a section of prose instructions on frying trouts, he is inspired to rime on the subject of the making of restorative broth of trouts, ending with the naïve piece of biographical information:

. . . . . for forty years I  
 In Ambassadors' kitchens learned my cookery.  
 The French and Italian no better can doe,  
 Observe well my rules and you'll say so too.

The following lines suggest Mother Goose:

Close to the bottom in the midst of the water,  
 I fished for a Salmon and there I caught her.

The final effusion treats of baits, then closes with the following:

But when of all sorts thou hast thy wish,  
 Follow Barker's advice to cook the fish;  
 Think then of the gatehouse for near it lives he,  
 Who kindly will teach thee to make the fly;  
 And if thou live by a river side,  
 Believe thou thy friend who often hath tried  
 And brought store of fish as sheep to the pen,  
 But friend let me tell thee once agen,

His art to keep thee both warm and dry  
Deserveth thy love perpetually,  
He names three men to thee, like a good friend,  
Make use of them all, and so I end.

In the last decade of the seventeenth century there are found two new efforts in verse on the subject of fishing; in 1692, a Latin poem entitled *Piscatio*, by the Reverend S. Ford, D. D.; in 1697, *The Innocent Epicure: or the Art of Angling*, believed to have been written by Nahum Tate. The former was inscribed to Archbishop Sheldon and first appeared in the first volume of the *Musae Anglicanae*. According to Manly,<sup>26</sup> it has been translated and variously adapted. The chief features of the *Innocent Epicure*, says Manly, are its antithetical sentences and smooth periods. John Whitney praises the author of this poem as an abler artist than himself, but if one must judge from the following couplet quoted by Manly, the writer certainly anticipates the worst products of the eighteenth century:

Go on my Muse, next let thy numbers speak,  
The mighty Nimrod of the streams, the Pike.

The product must, however, have made some appeal to readers of the eighteenth century, for a second edition appeared in 1713, a third as *the Art of Angling*, in 1741.

#### 4. Eighteenth-Century Didactic Poems on Fishing

John Whitney's *The Genteel Recreation, or the Pleasures of Angling, A Poem with a Dialogue between Piscator and Corydon* was published in 1700,<sup>27</sup> shortly after the appearance of the *Innocent Epicure*. It is "a little treatise," which, says the writer in his preface, he composed "for his own pleasure." He knows that there be many abler artists, especially that ingenious

<sup>26</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>27</sup> An extremely rare book, originally printed for the author, of whom nothing is known except that he was the son of Captain Whitney, who commanded one of the ships that accompanied Sir Walter Raleigh on his voyage to Guinea. One hundred copies were printed of the first edition, one hundred copies reprinted in 1820 for J. Burn, Maiden Lane, Covent Garden.



author of the *Innocent Epicure*. But he has taken nothing from him nor from others who "have wrote of the Art of Angling." He thinks his own experience best to display his own thoughts, which he has done in a kind of rambling way. His thoughts sometimes run on the Muse as well as on the Fishes, for which reason he uses verse, most of which was composed by the river-side in such seasons the Fish did not yield the pleasure he expected.

The poem is divided into four irregular parts, written in irregular and halting verse, the first an Introduction—a reflection on the happiness of the "Man blest with a moderate state" secured to him by "Law's strong Adamantine chains." So blest,

He gently can survey his Meads, and be  
Spectator of his own felicity;  
Those curious meads,  
New pleasure breeds,  
A purling Brook just by,  
Where the Inhabitants  
Of all the watery Elements,  
Strive Nature to outvie.  
Those various Beauties which the Medows breed,  
The watery fry in spangled glory far exceed,  
While carking cares that do the mind oppress,  
By Men unwary of their Happiness,  
Clog'd with the burden of Domestic cares,  
May here dispel those lingering fears,  
And learn new Joys, observing of the fry.

The second part consists of twenty-nine lines in which the poet sings of the true content begotten by the angler who cannot be enticed from his delight by bags of gold.

The third Part tells in sixty-seven lines of the taking of the Pike. It opens with the following couplet:

Now with the Tyrant of the Silver stream,  
I first, kind Maro, will begin my Angling Theme.

The thought of the "voracious Appetite" of the "Tyrant" enkindles the poet's fervour to fresh delight. Thus he sings:

When fair Aurora leaves her dark cavern  
And Sol's uprising first I can discern,  
Shaking the moisture from his dew'y locks

To set a Lustre on a Thousand *Lady Smocks*  
 Enameling the Meadow fair and bright,  
 But just reliev'd from the terrours of the night,  
 I march along . . .

After which pleasant description the poet proceeds to instruct his reader in such practical details of the art as poles, baits, the haunts and habits of different fishes.

The fourth Part consists of fifty-one pages that treat of angling in general. Thinking perhaps of Vergil's device of describing foreign lands, the poet mentions various localities which are for diverse reasons to be frequented or shunned by the angler. With some of these places he has had pleasant or curious experiences. Recalling a creature peculiar to Eton Bridge, the author describes him in the following remarkable fashion:

Roach-like scales, of burning gold,  
 That shine like mettle from Pactolus rolled,  
 Nameless he is, till some more fruitful pen  
 Describes his wondrous make, like Adam when  
 Baptizing Creatures with Immortal Names.  
 The glory of great *Medway* and more silver *Thames*.

In an apostrophe to his friend Streatfield, the poet introduces a georgic feature; georgic is, also, the appeal with which he introduces his account of the Trout,

Muse, sing now the Trout, with all his Arts,  
 His haunts, his motion, and his sudden starts,  
 When e'er a curious fly drops in the stream;  
 Make him thy choice, and choose from him thy theam.

Discoursing of the fishes' Æsculapius, the author digresses on the subject of physicians. He then justifies his craft, reflecting that Angling was sent by Heaven in order that by destroying those that would prey upon them, man may give to some of the fishes longer life.

The "patient Muse" is requested to raise her fancy once again and sing of eels. As almost nothing seems to exhaust her patience the reader is regaled with this choice subject; in the discussion of which the poet gives an account of eel fishing at night that introduces the georgic reflexion,



A rustic with a flambeau in his hand  
 Goes like a Page of Honor through the Strand  
 When Madam she's retiring from the Play to Court,  
 Cloy'd with vain repetitions of an Idle Sport,  
     Vain is that pleasure yields us no delight,  
     But dulls our over-clouded appetite.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps no more sincere tribute has been paid to Vergil than the following:

Now see, sweet Maro, of the Pearch, I sing,  
 And dedicate to thee, who art the Muses King,  
     My solemn Theme;  
 Assist me then,  
 Recorder of the Acts of God and Men,  
 Lest that my trembling Pen in vain essay  
 Ignis Fatuus like, lost in uncertain way.  
 Had I thy genius, then my quill should raise  
 Immortal glory to thy name with praise,  
 While thou, blest Hero, to the Gods conjoyn'd,  
 And, by eternal love, to Man combin'd,  
 Shows us the Paths of Virtue how to tread,  
 And magnify the Glory of the Dead.  
 For thou alone  
 Hast further gone  
 In thine Immortal lays  
 Than all the scribbling Poets in our last declining days.

The author emphasizes the forgotten proverb that

    No Angler ought to swear,  
 The least of oaths the Fishes soon will scare,  
 And imprecations too make them the bait forbear.

Giving an account of his luck at sport, Whitney modestly and piously remarks:

    Angler, had you been there you'd far'd as well as I,  
 For Heaven's bounty Heaven be prais'd eternally.

Writing of the voracious Chub, he pauses to moralize thus on vain Pride:

    Excess is hurtful.  
     Who covet all, but little can enjoy;

---

<sup>22</sup> Cp. John Dennys on the life of the "Youthful Gallant," Arber's *Eng. Garner*, p. 201.

And much, to some's esteemed the meanest toy,  
Alexander conquered all, yet sighing wept.  
Saladine's victories ended in a shirt.

A curious episode relating to the Bleak, sounds like an innocent parody on Aristæus and his bees. Beelzebub resenting the depopulation of his Kingdom, complains to his wife. Neptune is interviewed, and is about to starve the fishes, when a Bleak appears and brings about an amicable settlement. The writer incidentally indulges in some amiable satire on the Lady Birds and the Charters broke for a Female smile.

The poet then sings the joys and profit afforded by Angling, ending with the safe reflexion,

Labour in vain, the Ingenious do not prize,  
Pleasure that profit brings becomes the wise.

*The Dialogue between Piscator and Corydon*,<sup>28</sup> which may be described as a supplement to the *Genteel Recreation*, is an eclogue with georgic reflections and moralizations. Corydon, a herdsman, and Piscator, an angler, discuss their respective pleasures and profits. Corydon asks Piscator to declare the pleasures that he reaps, and prevails on him to spend a day by the riverside. Phillis, Chloris, and Hobb, rustic neighbors, appear and sing songs celebrating country joys and country virtues. After Piscator's departure, Corydon recites the praises of angling, ending—

Though I'm no Angler, Anglers still I'll love,  
For Angler's Patience comes from Mighty Jove.

In 1729 Moses Browne's *Piscatory Eclogues* appeared. How far they are didactic in character I cannot say, for I have been unable to see them. They were reissued with other works in 1739 under the title of *Poems on various Subjects*, separately in 1773 as *Angling Sports, in Nine Piscatory Eclogues*.<sup>29</sup> Manly<sup>30</sup> mentions another halieutic belonging to the first half of the eighteenth century, a product that appeared in 1740,

<sup>28</sup> Whitney, *op. cit.*, pp. 59 ff.

<sup>29</sup> *D. N. B.*, vol. VII.

<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*



entitled the *British Angler*, written by an author named Williamson, whom I have been unable to identify. If one judges by the specimen that Manly cites from the *British Angler* it must be pronounced a most unhappy effort. The citation is from a discussion on silk and hair lines:

Choose well your Hair, and know the vig'rous Horse,  
Not only reigns in Beauty, but in Force;  
Reject the Hair of Beasts, e'en newly dead,  
Where all the springs of Nature are decay'd.

Perhaps because of lack of interest in the subject, perhaps because of discouragement due to such efforts as those of Browne and Williamson, English poets seem not to have attempted treatises on the gentle craft for two decades after the appearance of the *British Angler*. Still the theme of fishing does not disappear altogether from English verse; in 1750 the Reverend John Duncombe translated the greater part of Vanière's treatise on fish-ponds, the fifteenth book of the *Praedium Rusticum*.<sup>31</sup> The translation may be read in the supplement to Daniel's *Rural Sports*.<sup>32</sup>

These verses, Vanière remarks in a note, were written in the poet's earlier years. In the fashion of Père Rapin, whom Vanière thought it praiseworthy to imitate, many fables<sup>33</sup> are interwoven with the more serious subject matter. The verse is further adorned with constant moralizations, but the poet is not so far lost in morals and fables as to neglect to instruct his readers in the proper methods concerning the making and the management of fishponds and the art of ensnaring the fish.

<sup>31</sup> See above, p. 68.

<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 35 ff.

<sup>33</sup> In the edition of 1746, Book xv of the *Praedium Rusticum* has a delightful illustration. A river is represented flowing between a turreted castle and a huge rock from which the nymph Truita (afterwards metamorphosed into the trout), is leaping madly, pursued by her cruel admirer Lucius (afterward the pike). Below the rock an unmoved individual is casting a net into the water, and under a tree on the other side of the stream, are three fat, exulting cherubs, one in the act of landing a large fish. The cherubs suggest the first canto of M. Jammes' *Géorgiques chrétiennes* in which the poet fancies angels harvesting in the fields and hovering about the farmer's family at their household talk. See above, p. 47.

Discussing the sites for ponds, Vanière writes with the heart of Vergil's teaching well in mind,

Camporum qui plana colit, licet aggere multo  
Vix bene contineat graviorum pondus aquarum  
Nil desperet; *opum vis et labor omnia vincunt* <sup>34</sup>

The following quotation from Duncombe's translation illustrates very happily the poet's didactic manner.

Now o'er the neighb'ring Streams extend your Nets  
And throw your lines well furnished with deceits,  
Join scarlet Colours, which exposed to view  
Fish thro' the water greedily pursue;  
And as a skillful Fowler, Birds employs,  
Which by their well-known Voice and treacherous noise,  
Allure their Fellows and invite to share  
Their fate entangled in the viscous Snare;  
So Fish when taken, other Fish allure;  
Who, seeing them, grow dauntless and secure;  
But not thro' *studied Malice* they betray,  
But by our Art deceive the finny prey,  
Man only with *premeditated mind*  
Betrays his Brethren and, ensnares Mankind.

In 1758 the didactic Muse again raised her head vigorously, if one may not say triumphantly. Thomas Scott of Ipswich published a poem entitled *The Art of Angling; Eight Dialogues in Verse*.<sup>35</sup> The author acknowledges the fountain of his inspiration in his motto:

Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes,  
Flumina amem, sylvasque, inglorius.<sup>36</sup>

In his note to the Reader, the Bookseller comments on the writer's sagacity in choosing a subject pleasing to the ruling taste of the age:<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Cp. *Georg.* I, 145, labor omnia vicit.

<sup>35</sup> Reprinted in Ruddiman's *Collection of Scarce, Curious and Valuable Pieces*, Edinburgh, 1773.

<sup>36</sup> *Georg.* II, 485.

<sup>37</sup> At this time and during the first quarter of the nineteenth century the interest in fishing literature seems to have almost equalled the vogue of gardening literature in the early years of the eighteenth century. Thomas Pike Lathy seems to have been more eager than wise in the manner in which



The dialogues are furnished with notes signed with the names Zoilus, Aristarchus, Farnaby the Younger, Moses Browne and so forth. Zoilus comments thus on the title: "How artfully has this author screened himself from our attacks, by giving to his compositions the titles of dialogues! O that he had called them eclogues! I should then have been furnished with a fair occasion to display my reading and my critical skill, by showing that neither his characters nor his sentiments nor his expression agree with the simplicity so essential to that species of Poems."

The first dialogue is "A Defense of Angling."<sup>38</sup> The scene is the meadows; the season the coming in of Spring. Candidus and Severus speak.

Candidus asks if virtue will frown upon them if they fish and stay in these "springing meads." Severus replies,

Virtue, my friend, on no enjoyment smiles  
Which idle hours debase, or vice defiles.  
The wise to life's momentous work attend;  
And think and act still pointing to their end.

Candidus urges that pastimes are necessary, and compares them to parentheses in verse, but remarks that, as in verse, parentheses too long disturb the song,

So pastimes which ingross too large a space  
Disturb life's system and its work deface.

Severus argues for sports that arouse, not waste, the spirits. Candidus observes that some prefer the chase, and digresses to describe a hare hunt, but decides that each must amuse himself according to his taste, ending,

I no man's joys arraign,  
Me, lonely vales and winding currents please,  
And arts of fishing entertain my ease.

---

he tried to satisfy the public demand. In 1819 he carried out one of the most amazing of literary frauds, transferring bodily the Eight Dialogues into ten cantos entitled *The Anglers* with notes, etc., by Piscator (T. R. Lathy, esq.). After a number of copies were printed on royal paper, and one on vellum at a cost of ten pounds, the fraud was discovered and pointed out by Scott's nephew, who was in possession of the original manuscript. See *D. N. B.*, Vol. **xxxii**, p. 171.

<sup>38</sup> Cp. John Denny's "Answer to the Objection."

Severus objects to the "mire and the sordid toils of fishing." Candidus explains that he has nothing to do with mire, "the decent angle's" his. Severus objects to the gout-bringing exhalations of the marsh. Candidus answers that he has sense enough to be warned of the approach of evening in time to get home before the "brown horror woods and streams invades." Severus remarks that he doesn't call angling exercise. Candidus urges that the skilled Angler changes the scene, wanders from mead to mead, "still casting as he moves." He returns home blessedly tired, and spends his evening in the classic page,

Or fancy, flowing with recruited vein,  
Pours out her pleasures 'in his rhyming strain.  
Let not my friend despise, with cynic mood  
Our pastime, honored by the wise and good;  
By blameless Nowell, Wotton's cheerful age,  
Colton's clear wit and Walton's rural page.  
With rapture these beheld the people'd flood,  
The chequer'd meadow and the waving wood;  
Here found in solitude emollient rest  
From rugged cares and tumults of the breast:  
Here virtues learn'd (ill learned by formal rules)  
Unknown to courts, unknown to wrangling schools,  
Patience and Peace, and gentleness of mind,  
Contempt of wealth and love of human kind.

Severus is converted, but declares that if he ever wields the fisher's reed, its bark shall bear the maxim,

All pastimes that engross too large a space  
Disturb life's system and its work deface.

Whereat Zoilus remarks, "O the shocking pride of this Author! He hath first the presumption to dignify a dry saying of his own with the title of a maxim or a moral axiom, and next, the assurance to hint to the sellers of fishing tackle that he would have them get this same law engraven on the outside of every fishing rod in their shops."

The second Dialogue, between Tyro and Piscator, treats of some general rules of the sport. The opening is a description of delaying spring and a moralization on deceived hopes. The Anglers, it appears, speak feelingly, since they have been so

deceived that it is necessary to give up their sport. Tyro, however, begs instructions from Piscator before they part. Piscator begins with the following Preface:

Walton could teach; his meek, enchanting vein  
The Shepherd's mingles with the Fisher's strain;  
Nature and genius animate his lines,  
And our whole science in his precepts shines.  
Howe'er, to fill this little void of time,  
And titilate your ear with jingling rhyme,  
Receive in brief epitome the rules  
Anglers revere, the doctrine of their schools.

The rules follow. The verses,

Your line, or by the spinning worm supplied  
Or by the high-born courser's hairy pride.

are almost equal to Armstrong's description of an icehouse, or Mason's of the net, "the Sportsman's hempen toils."<sup>39</sup>

After some precepts concerning baits the author discusses ill-omen'd seasons, and weather signs.<sup>40</sup> Tyro asks one more favor, "The Angler's Song," and Piscator obligingly complies with his request, singing the praises of the Angler's life, far from the clamor and the sorrow that end the pleasure of the drunkard's bowl, and unshadowed by the dangers that threaten the hunter's life. The fisher can enjoy the outdoor world, and he can reflect "how time is gliding," but he refuses to mourn while the present is glad. He concludes with the courageous sentiment,

Yea, when autumn's russet mantle  
Saddens the decaying year,  
I will fish and I will chant, till  
Feeble age shall change my cheer.

The third Dialogue, between Garrulus and Lepidus, on "Angling for Trout," is pastoral rather than georgic. Musæus envying Severus' luck, decides to sit and sing to the naiads. His ruse succeeds; the trout bite.

The fourth Dialogue, on "Perch," is varied by a short narra-

<sup>39</sup> See above, p. 85.

<sup>40</sup> Cp. *Georg.* I, 351 ff.



tive episode; then Lepidus being asked to cheer the dullness by the "farmer's song," breaks into a satirical ditty on the severity of the game laws, and the damage done to farm lands by the hunt.<sup>41</sup> Garrulus gets a fish, but his comments are interrupted by Lepidus, who tells a fish tale that Zoilus comments on in the notes as a "romantic affair, the whole of which he looks upon as a 'Swinging lie.'" Lepidus muses on the varied characters of fish.<sup>42</sup> Shock, the dog, blunders into the water after a water rat, and Lepidus recalls the story of a Dutch attendant who fell into the water. Zoilus comments severely on the relations of a preacher and laughter. Further moralizations follow on cheating.

The fifth Dialogue, on the "Carp," begins with a conversation on the innocent pleasure and beauty of a country walk.

The next lines illustrate the georgic note of complaint against the evils of the time, and show again that poets of the georgic strain wrote insecure of audience even in the eighteenth century:

Who sings of virtue in these iron times,  
Sings to the wind, for ears endure the rhymes,  
But fame and wealth reward the glorious toil,  
Scrawl but a novel or write notes on Hoyle.\*

Lepidus makes an answer that illustrates the georgic feature of references to famous men, and shows the writer's common sense, if not his poetical ability—

Lash not the times alone, withal complain  
Of bards unequal to the lofty strain  
The heavenly fire once warmed in Addison.

A preceptual note is introduced in Lucius' advice to Verus, to turn from the sun, lest his shadow frighten the carp. The carp having been caught, Verus urges rest and conversation. Lucius suggests Greenland as the scene, thus introducing the familiar

\* Cp. Somerville, Gay and Shenstone. See above, p. 126.

\* A georgic touch. Cp. Vergil on vines. *Georg.* II, 91-109.

\* Zoilus comments that the author speaks feelingly, as if from personal experience of rejected mss. or unsold copies.

device of contrast with foreign country. Verus describes whale fishing. Lucius then bursts into a panegyric on Britain, which Verus thinks overdone at the present moment, as he regrets the loss of Minorca, and sighs for a race of honest men not to be corrupted by bribes and party sentiment.

Lucius notes the mounting of the sun and philosophizes on the quick passing of life, the small pittance of time worth while, the necessity of spending that time well.

The sixth Dialogue, between Axylus and Musæus, is mainly in praise of the value of the gentle exercise of Angling, in which the sportsman breaks no laws. Commenting on the fishes' enemy, the otter, a hunt is described, and the poet moralizes on the necessity of hunting human tyrants, otters that prey upon their fellow men.

Dialogue eighth, between Axylus and Musæus, treats of trawling for Pike. The manner of catching a Pike is described, also the manner in which Serena prepares it with "the churn's golden lumps of clodded oil."

Axylus asks information concerning the origin of fishing. Musæus responds:

Walton, our great forefather and our pride,  
The curious search with happy labour try'd;  
He found our ward in wild Arabia nurst,  
And patient Job great fisherman the first.  
But brains of scholars are inventive things;  
Read Monmouth's Geoffrey, read Buchanan's Kings.  
Yet if the Muse's wreath bestows renown  
Is not our name immortalized by Browne.

Thinking of Vergil, Chiron observes:

Nature, my friends, whose certain signs ordain  
The time to scatter and to reap the grain,  
Governs our art.

Advice follows concerning the time to fish, the seasons being marked by the constellations.

The three anglers continue to fish and converse by turns. They discuss the instincts of fish, and the question of whether or not the fishes hear. Musæus digresses to tell the story of a carp

that came at the call of a Monk of St. Bernard on the banks of the Scheldt, and rings in a satirical passage on luxury and superstition. Musæus remarks,

Good cheer will mount me to Apollo's steep.

An observation that causes Zoilus to comment on Musæus' insufferable arrogance and to name among those who have climbed Parnassus, Flatman, Tom D'Urfy, Taylor the Water Poet, and a few others needless to mention.

The eighth Dialogue, on "Fishing for Pike with Lay Hooks," is particularly notable for its descriptions of nature. These optimistic sportsmen have praises even for winter. The Anglers congratulate themselves on the superior qualities of their joys, and finally they "descend from Pegasus and retire to share their frugal viand."

*The Art of Angling* might be described as reading neither unpleasant nor unprofitable. The notes, presumably the author's, are amusingly facetious. The verse, in general, flows smoothly. The writer appears not to regard very seriously either his theme or his own poetic powers, so the whole poem is leavened by a vein of humorous common sense. The work is interesting as a specimen of the eclogue used for didactic purposes. It can hardly be called a masterpiece even of fishing literature, but it is a work that every reader who loves the gentle craft would gladly have on the shelves of his library.

##### 5. *Nineteenth-Century Didactic Poems on Angling*

In the early years of the nineteenth century John Dennys was still read; and in his native land, the tribute of English verse was still being spent on the theme first honored by him with such a tribute. But thru a curious bit of irony, Charles Clifford, who read the *Secrets* and wrote the *Angler, a Didactic Poem*,<sup>44</sup> has in the opinion of later critics immortalized himself,

<sup>44</sup> London, 1804. For my knowledge of this rare book, I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Hyder E. Rollins, who read it for me at Harvard.



not by his own production, but by the expression of his contempt for the *Secrets*.<sup>45</sup>

The 1804 edition of *The Angler* leaves the reader under the impression that the writer may have left his work uncompleted. The volume contains four hundred and ninety lines of blank verse headed Book I, and followed by the information "End of Book I."

In the "Advertisement" prefixed to the poem, the author voices the sentiment of John Basse in *The Angler's Song*:<sup>46</sup>

I care not, I, to fish in seas—  
Fresh rivers most my mind do please.

Clifford, however, expresses himself in the manner of the eighteenth century. His words are worth quoting, chiefly because they prove that he was acquainted with Oppian's *Halieutica*, but that he disdains to sing the song of the Cilician. Thus the English author writes: "The plan of Oppian confines him to sing of fishing on the *main seas*, as they are styled, or rather to the enumeration of various species of Fish which sojourn there, their habits, their amours, and modes of preying, both true and fabulous. The following work leaves these subjects wholly untouched. . . . In the meantime the author confines himself entirely to the pursuits of the true and legitimate Angler, who with taper rod and dancing hook, gaudily fashioned like a giddy fly, exerts all his dexterity in beguiling the nobler inmates of the stream, the trout and salmon."

Altho he scorned the plan of Oppian, Clifford evidently avails himself to some extent of the model of the *Georgics*. His poem begins with the stock opening, a statement of the subject, after which he offers a defense of Angling from the Imputation of Cruelty. To poetize his subject, he alternates his practical instructions with digressions. He introduces the subject of foreign lands in an account of the scenery and people of Greenland. This theme may have been suggested to him by Thomas

<sup>45</sup> See the "Advertisement" to Clifford's *Angler*, p. iv.

<sup>46</sup> *Old English Songs*, Macmillan & Co., New York, 1894, p. 30.

Scott's account of whale fishing;<sup>47</sup> but Clifford develops the theme very differently, dwelling, like Hesiod and Vergil and Thomson, on the distinctive features of the northern winter, altho he seems not to have borrowed anything more than the subject from the older poets.

No actual hatred of human warfare appears to be expressed in *The Angler*, but one might imply that the author finds the struggle with the "finny tribe" more to his liking than an encounter on the field of battle, for his Muse sings—

Of contests keen, not bloodless—victories  
Not without ambush, or manœuvred skill.  
The warfare 'gainst the finny tribe she sings;  
When with the mellow morn the accoutred angler  
Hies to the limpid brook or broader flood,  
To wage the contest with the heedless trout  
Or floundering salmon.

Clifford refers occasionally to well-known writers, to famous heroes and to mythological stories; and he digresses frequently to describe natural objects.

In the conclusion of his description of Greenland he points out the love of each individual for his native land, developing with some skill the generous sentiment Mr. Knight expresses in *The Landscape*:

No state or clime's so bad but that the mind  
Formed to enjoy content, content will find.\*

Mr. Clifford's lines, which have a decided Thomsonian ring, are as follows:

Oh, bounteous Nature, falsely oft accused  
Of partial kindness!—Midst the dreary waste  
An airy palace gay thou rear'st in lieu  
Of sculptured domes;—for summer suns thou giv'st  
A midnight radiance; and tho bleak the clime  
And desolate the shore, yet o'er the wilds  
Roams a free tenant, unannoyed by care,  
And prizing more his rocks and fishy shores  
Than slavish Indians prize the spicy grove,  
The golden streamlet, flower-empurpled field  
And all the riches of their gem-fraught soil.

\* See above, p. 163.

\* See above, p. 99.

Considered as a halieutic *The Angler* is a poem not without merit. The author shows a real love of Nature, and his descriptive lines are occasionally rich in color effect. But Clifford's verses can bear no comparison with the *Secrets of Angling*. The later poem lacks entirely the flowing sweetness of John Dennys' stanzas. There is nothing in it of the almost childlike delight of the earlier poet in the outdoor world. One does not find in Clifford the naïvely pleasant quality that makes delightful John Whitney's imperfect verse, nor is there in *The Angler* the amusingly sententious manner that marks the Dialogues of John Scott. Critics have expressed some wonder that John Dennys was willing to devote so much poetic talent to the theme of Angling. If one may judge from his verse and from the history of the publication of the *Secrets*, John Dennys would have been utterly surprised at this wonder; but the reader gathers from Clifford's Advertisement as well as from his verse that he felt that it was condescension on his part to give his production to the angling world.

How many other writers after Clifford may have experimented with the subject of fishing, in didactic verse, I cannot say. The most notorious effort to satisfy the public's interest in the theme of Angling was the fraud of Thomas Pike Lathy,<sup>49</sup> whose bold theft of Thomas Scott's work is an interesting illustration of the truth of the remark, "No class of books is so eagerly bought up as those relating to fish and fishing—none sooner go out of print."<sup>50</sup>

Lathy's stolen verses were printed in 1819. After that I know of no attempt at a didactic on the fisher's art except a lengthy poem on "Trolling," published in 1839, in W. Watt's *Remarks on Shooting in Verse*. Manly,<sup>51</sup> to whom I am indebted for my slight knowledge of this composition, remarks of the author that "he seems to be one of that class of writers who have an idea that anything which rhymes is poetry, and

<sup>49</sup> See above, p. 159, n. 37.

<sup>50</sup> See "The Angler's Library," *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>51</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 668.



though his description of the tackle and the way of using it in this branch of angling is correct enough, the poem is hardly worth reading."

The story of the halieutic can not be said to work up to a climax; but it makes a very pleasant and a very interesting chapter in a study of the developments of georgic poetry. One curious feature in the history of the halieutic is its apparently rare occurrence in French and Italian literature. Tiraboschi <sup>52</sup> mentions a *Halieutica* written by Nicolo Partenio Giannettasio in 1689, but I know nothing whatever of the character of the work. Vanière wrote of Fishing in his *Stagna*; <sup>53</sup> whether in his poem on *Agriculture* de Rosset treats of the fisherman's art while discussing the subject of fishponds <sup>54</sup> I cannot say.

In English poetry the halieutic is a much more frequent type than the cynegetic. Certainly an unprejudiced reader finds much more pleasure in the pages of the halieutic than in the pages of the cynegetic poets. The pursuit of angling by no means makes of its followers great writers, but it is a pursuit whose wholesome character is generally reflected in the pages of those who have devoted themselves to celebrating the fisherman's art. If there is plenty of doggerel to be found in the compositions on angling, there is also much really charming verse. The joys of early morning, the spirit of meditation begotten by sky and wood and water are not things to be scorned. The poets of the gentle craft have made little pretense to preach the doctrine of constant labor, but they have proved the wholesomeness of their recreation, which needs no abler defense than John Dennys' "Reply to the Objection." The objection to the wasted energy in a study of the didactic poem on the fisherman's art needs no better defense than a reading of John Dennys' *Secrets of Angling*.

---

<sup>52</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>53</sup> See above, p. 158.

<sup>54</sup> See above, p. 68.

## CHAPTER VII.

## CONCLUSION.

In this study I have attempted first to define the georgic as a literary type, and to show that as a type it is clearly distinct from the pastoral, altho closely related to it; secondly, to sketch in outline the general history of the georgic, to give some idea of the variations in the development of the type, and to classify these variations; thirdly, to treat in detail as fully as possible English georgics on general agriculture, on gardening, and on field sports, and to discuss, also, to some extent French and Italian didactic poems on these themes. In studying the individual developments of the georgic type, I have tried to consider them in relation to the other compositions included in the same group, to show in how far they are Vergilian in spirit and in form, and in how far they are of value as reflections of the literary influences or of the temper of the time.

The georgic as a *genre* cannot be disregarded. It persists clear-cut, unmistakable in its leading features, thru all its phases, from the serious didactic treatment purely of field work, such as Alamanni's *Coltivazione*, to the burlesque imitation with its background of city streets exemplified in Gay's *Trivia*. In general, except for the rural setting and the occasional appearance of the shepherd on the scene, the georgic holds clearly apart from the pastoral. Occasionally the types cross. For example, Bloomfield's *Farmer's Boy* (p. 45, n. 69) has been said to be the most truly Theocritean piece in the English language, but it is a poem that has the realistic qualities of the georgic, and that illustrates the georgic features of digressions arising from the theme, altho it does not deal with rules of practice, nor with the science of agriculture. John Whitney's *Dialogue between Piscator and Corydon* is a pastoral of mixed

character, exemplifying certain conventions of the georgic (p. 157).

The story of the georgic begins about the eighth century B. C. with the *Works and Days* of Hesiod, and ends in the twentieth century A. D. with the *Géorgiques chrétiennes* of Francis Jammes (p. 46). A long story, but so far as I have been able to discover, there are breaks in it of centuries at a time. From Vergil, who imitated the subject matter of Hesiod's *Works and Days*, and created the literary type of the georgic, to Gioviano Pontano, who wrote the *Garden of the Hesperides, or the Culture of the Citron* just before 1500, there can hardly be averaged a georgic a century, and of these not one is both georgic in subject matter and Vergilian in plan. However, the georgic, like the pastoral, altho in lesser degree, has had its periods of vogue due to the circumstances or to the temper of the time. But these periods of favor lie far apart.

Until the sixteenth century I have found no new developments in the georgic type except 'Columellas' hexameters on gardens (p. 75), the poems on field sports represented by the *Cynegetica* and the *Halieutica*, the poems of Gratius and Nemesianus and Oppian, and the didactic works on Falconry and on the chase of the stag found in mediæval France (pp. 110 ff.). That the subject of fishing was one of interest in the days of Oppian of Cilicia may be judged from the fact that the *Halieutica* was publicly recited at Rome in the presence of the Emperor Severus and his family. The mediæval didactics on the chase were probably due to the interest of the great baronial lords in that subject.

In the sixteenth century, in Italy, several new developments occur in the history of the georgic. Pontano's *Garden of the Hesperides* was written before 1500. After that, not only are there new poems on agriculture and on the chase, but there are Vergilian didactics on bees, on silkworms, on navigation, even on the rearing of children (p. 31). And in Germany, Thomas Kirchmayer's *Agricoltura Sacra* represents a curious adaptation of georgic conventions to a religious theme, like the similar



adaptations of pastoral conventions found in the fourth or fifth century (p. 38). These sixteenth-century productions are due chiefly to the fact that at this period in Europe, particularly in Italy, any imitation of the classics was regarded as worthy of praise.

In the seventeenth century the georgic almost disappears; a few angling poems (p. 32), Père Rapin's *Horti* and another Latin poem on gardens seem the sole representatives of the type. In the eighteenth century not only were Vergil's didactics read, translated and imitated, but everything else in the nature of a georgic was brought out of the past, translated, imitated, or reimprinted. John Phillips' *Cyder* and Thomson's *Seasons* appear to have given the impulse to the fashion (p. 35). Thru their interest in Thomson, the French, usually averse to didactic poetry of any kind, begin to see the world of nature with new eyes, and finally experiment with georgic verse on various themes. Possibly thru English influence, Italian interest in a type of poetry created on English soil is once more revived. In England, in France, and in Italy almost every development of the *genre* occurs, from general agricultural treatises to the serio-comic burlesque with a background of city streets. So the georgic type of poetry appears to have passed in a circular fashion from Italy to England, and back again from England to Italy, travelling along with the eighteenth-century love of nature and English gardens and all other things romantic.<sup>1</sup>

A study of the georgic often seems to lead thru endless wastes of dreary reading. The *genre* of the Vergilian didactic is an outworn fashion. Francis Jammes, it is true, was bold enough to entitle a book of poems *Les Géorgiques chrétiennes*, but he follows Vergil's conventions only in part. Modern readers regard the eighteenth-century popularity of the georgic as an added proof that there was little poetry in the neo-classic age;

<sup>1</sup> The history of the eighteenth century georgic is curiously analogous to the story of the word romantic, which was first used in England, then introduced from England into France and Italy and Germany where it acquired a new and important meaning with which it was brought back again to England.

as a curious phenomenon of literary taste that can be explained only by the assumption that the period was one curiously lacking both in a sense of artistic fitness and in a sense of humor.

The georgic as a poetic type appealed strongly to the Augustan age. Shenstone was only voicing the general sentiment when he wrote in his *Prefatory Essay on Elegy* that "Poetry without moralizing is but the blossom of a fruit tree." In the early years of the century a new school was growing up side by side with Pope and his followers, a group of poets with a more or less developed love of the woods and fields, men who were tired of the town and the literature of polite conversation, ready to revolt against them, and almost ready to revolt against talk of reason and morals and intelligence. The habit of moralizing was deep rooted in the British temperament, and the fashion of imitating the classics had become second nature. Vergil's *Georgics* offered all the qualities that appealed to eighteenth-century lovers of nature; it was a classic, a literary model perfected by a great artist. Each of Vergil's *Georgics* is a masterpiece. What one man can do why not another? But the way of the georgic is perilous. The Mantuan's name became a light leading thru deserts. Huchon does not exaggerate when he classes Vergil "mal compris," as among the most pernicious influences of the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> A great poet can take the substance from the milk and water of a lesser writer and make it virile. Much more easily a lesser poet can attempt to imitate a great poet and produce something worse than milk and water. Especially easy is it for an English poet to fail when he takes a Latin poem for his model. The English and the Latin tongues are essentially different. An English poem lives only when it is English. Vergil's diction becomes inflated bombast when unskilled writers try to use it. Milton succeeded in imitating Latin construction and expression only because he was, like Vergil, a genius, and a master of harmonies. John Phillips

<sup>2</sup> René Huchon, *Un poète réaliste anglais: George Crabbe, 1754-1832*. Paris, 1906, p. 149. But the French critic carries his point far when he classes Crabbe's *Library* as "a degenerate son of the *Georgics*." The *Library* is a didactic, but it is not of the georgic type.



DO NOT REMOVE  
OR  
MUTILATE CARDS